THE GREAT FRENCHMAN & THE LITTLE GENEVESE

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THE GREAT FRENCHMAN AND THE LITTLE GENEVESE

THE GREAT FRENCHMAN AND THE LITTLE GENEVESE

TRANSLATED FROM ETIENNE DUMONT'S "SOUVENIR SUR MIRABEAU"

BY

LADY SEYMOUR

"The greatest star is that at the little end of the telescope—the star that is looking; not looked after, nor looked at."

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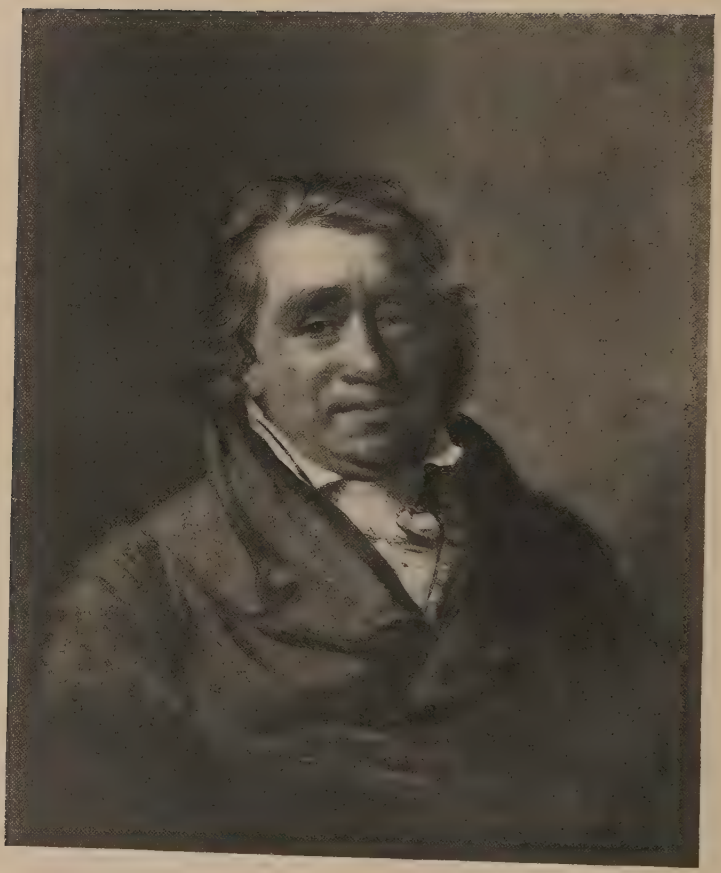

ETIENNE DUMONT

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PREFACE

ETIENNE Dumont's "Souvenir sur Mirabeau" was published in 1832, and though the book excited great attention at the time, and has been freely quoted by all writers on the French Revolution, more especially by Carlyle, it has never, as far as I know, been translated into English before. Carlyle has picked out many of the most interesting anecdotes and has reproduced them in his history and also in his essay on Mirabeau,[1] but his attitude towards Dumont himself is far from sympathetic, and it is interesting to compare his idea of Dumont's character with that of Macaulay as shown in his article in the "Edinburgh Review" for July, 1832. Carlyle says, "Dumont is faithful, veridical; within his own limits he has even a certain amount of picturesqueness and light clearness. It is true, the whim he had of looking at the great Mirabeau as a thing set in motion mainly by him (M. Dumont), and such as he, was one of the most wonderful to be met with in psychology, nay more still, how the Reviewers, pretty generally some from whom much better

[1] Miscellanies.

was expected, took up the same with aggravations, and it became on all sides, that here again a great pretender had been stripped, . . . that in fact this enormous Mirabeau, the sound of whom went forth to all lands, was no other than an enormous trumpet or coach horn, of japanned tin, through which the dexterous little M. Dumont was blowing all the time and making the noise! . . .

"The good Dumont accurately records what ingenious journey work and fetching and carrying he did for his Mirabeau, interspersing many an anecdote which the world is very glad of, extenuating nothing we do hope nor exaggerating anything; this is what he did and had a clear right to do. And what if it failed, not altogether, yet in some measure if it did fail to strike him that he still was but a 'Dumont'—nay, that the gift this Mirabeau had of enlisting such respectable Dumonts to do hod work and even skilful handiwork for him was precisely the Kinghood of the Man and did itself stamp him as a leader of men! . . . His error is of oversight and venial, his worth too is indisputable."

Macaulay's view of the book is a very different one; he says, "This is a very amusing and a very instructive book, but even if it were less amusing and less instructive it would still be interesting as a relic of a wise and virtuous man. M. Dumont was one of those persons the care of whose fame belongs in a special manner to mankind. For he was one of those persons who have for the sake of mankind neglected the care of their own fame. In his walk

through life there was no obtrusiveness, no pushing, no elbowing, none of the little arts that bring forward little men. . . . Though no man was more capable of achieving for himself a separate and independent renown, he attached himself to others, he laboured to raise their fame, he was content to receive as his share of the reward the mere overflowings which redounded from the full measure of their glory. Not that he was of a servile and idolatrous habit of mind; not that he was one of the tribe of Boswells, those literary Gibeonites born to be hewers of wood and drawers of water to the higher intellectual castes. Possessed of talents and acquirements that made him great, he wished only to be useful. In the prime of manhood, at the very time of life at which ambitious men are most ambitious, he was not solicitous to proclaim that he furnished information, arguments and eloquence to Mirabeau. In his later years he was perfectly willing that his renown should merge in that of Mr. Bentham. . . .

"His Mirabeau is incomparable. All the former Mirabeaus were daubs in comparison. Till now Mirabeau was to us, and we believe to most readers of history, not a man, but a string of antitheses. Henceforth he will be a real human being.

"There are several other admirable portraits of eminent men in these memoirs. That of Sieyes in particular, and that of Talleyrand are masterpieces, full of life and expression; but nothing in the book has interested us more than the view which M. Dumont has presented to us un-

ostentatiously, and we may say unconsciously, of his own character. The sturdy rectitude, the large charity, the good nature, the modesty, the independent spirit, the ardent philanthropy, the unaffected indifference to money and to fame, make up a character which, while it has nothing unnatural, seems to us to approach nearer to perfection than any of the Grandisons or Allworthys of fiction."

That Lord Macaulay's view of Dumont's character was also that of his contemporaries, is fully shown in the memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly. He writes as follows: "During this residence at Geneva (1781) I formed a friendship with a young man of my own age of the name of Dumont, who was then studying for the church, and was soon after admitted one of its ministers. His vigorous understanding, his extensive knowledge, and his splendid eloquence qualified him to have acted the noblest part in public life, while the brilliancy of his wit, the cheerfulness of his humour, and the charms of his conversation, have made him the delight of every society in which he has lived; but his most valuable qualities are his strict integrity, his zeal to serve those whom he is attached to, and his most affectionate disposition."[1]

In an unpublished letter to Sir Samuel Romilly of June, 1807, Dumont thus alludes to his early aspirations: "Eh bien, j'avais déjà alors un plan tout arrangé dans ma tête, mon village, mon église, mes sermons, ma femme, peut-être mes enfants, et a coup sûr ma patrie, car à quinze ans je

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. i., p. 58.

l'aimais avec passion, et tout cela s'est évanoui, mais il ne faut pas se plaindre, il y a eu des compensations, et plus même que je n'en ai mérité."

Dumont had a considerable reputation in Geneva as a preacher, but he got involved in the political troubles of that town in 1783, and went to St. Petersburg, where he was the pastor of a Protestant church for eighteen months. In 1785 he came to London at the request of Lord Lansdowne who, on the advice of Sir Samuel Romilly, confided to him the education of his younger son Henry, who afterwards succeeded to the title.

It was at Lansdowne House that he made the acquaintance of all the celebrated Englishmen of the day: Sheridan, Fox, Lord Holland, and Lord Brougham. His friendship with Sir Samuel Romilly grew closer every day and was continued till the tragedy which ended Sir Samuel's life in 1818. This was a sorrow for which Dumont was never consoled, and for the rest of his life he could never speak of his friend without emotion.

It was in 1788 that he and Romilly went to Paris together, and he then became acquainted with Mirabeau.[1]

Sir Samuel writes, "Mirabeau was at this time in Paris, publishing his great work on the Prussian Monarchy. We

[1] In 1789 Mirabeau wrote to Lord Lansdowne imploring him not to induce Dumont to return to London, and saying that he was of the greatest use in the work of regeneration of the French nation, at the head of which he (Mirabeau) had been placed by the force of circumstances. He concluded by begging Lord Lansdowne to allow Dumont to complete Mirabeau's education before undertaking that of his son.

saw him, I renewed my acquaintance with him; he was delighted with Dumont's wit and extraordinary talents, we became again very intimate and passed many hours in his most captivating society."[1]

From that visit dates the connection between the two men—"The great Frenchman and the little Genevese" as Carlyle calls them.

Sir Samuel wrote in the following year (1789):[2]

"I believe that it is no exaggeration to say that all the good which Mirabeau has done was suggested to him by Dumont or Duroverai, and that they have prevented him from doing nothing but what was mischievous. It is hardly necessary to say that Dumont has acted with the purest disinterestedness and that he never had any other object in view than that of being useful.

"He has done what few people could have had magnanimity enough to do; he has seen his compositions universally extolled as masterpieces of eloquence, and all the merit of them ascribed to persons who had not written a single word in them; and he has never discovered that he was the author of them but to those from whom it was impossible to conceal it."

There are only two subjects on which Sir Samuel ever finds fault with Dumont. In a letter written to him in 1789 he says, "I think you talk a great deal too much of Geneva, and that you are likely to prevent, rather than to promote,

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. i., p. 96.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 386.

the freedom of the Republic by so often dinning it in the ears of the French. They will soon be as tired of hearing you talk of your Geneva as they are of hearing M. Necker talk of his integrity."[1]

The other cause of complaint was that he did not undertake the writing of a history of the Revolution.

"You will be unpardonable if you do not," he writes; "I assure you with the utmost sincerity that I don't believe there is any man living capable of doing it so well as yourself; and it certainly must be the fault of the historian if it is not one of the most interesting works that ever was composed. Pray undertake it and collect all the materials for it that you can"; and in another letter, "I shall not be easy till I see you quietly established in Berkeley Square (Lansdowne House) writing the History of the Revolution, and giving me a sheet at a time to translate. Positively you must undertake it. Your objections amount only to this, that you will not be able to attain an ideal perfection which you have painted to yourself, are good for nothing. With all the defects that even your severity may imagine, it will still be the most useful work that has been published for a century, and will be infinitely better executed by you than by any other person that attempts it. Once more, you must undertake it. Make it a work for posterity, but make it a work for the present generation too, and prepare for yourself the sublimest of all pleasures, that of contemplating the extensive good which you will have effected. Indeed,

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. i., p. 378.

I am serious in thinking that you cannot renounce the idea of writing the work I have mentioned to you and be exempt from all criminality."[1]

Dumont had argued, not without reason, that the "harvest of events is not yet ripe, there must be a second legislature at least to complete the work of the first, and time alone can bring to light those facts without which it would be impossible to form the groundwork of a history."

Romilly's suggestion was never acted on to the extent that he had hoped for, but a series of historical letters on the events of the four months from April to September 1789 of which he had been an eye-witness, were written by M. Dumont, and translated into English by Romilly. They were published in 1792 under the title of the "Groenveldt Letters."

In 1793 Romilly returns to the charge.

"Indeed I am quite vexed, not only with you, but with myself, when I see such means of being useful to mankind as you possess so lost as they seem likely to be. I reproach myself as being in some degree an accomplice, by not endeavouring to rouse you from so fatal a lethargy. Indeed, Dumont, you must come to a resolution of doing something that will be useful to posterity. Surely the hope of being able to prevent some of those calamities from falling on future ages, which we now see so dreadfully visiting the present, might be as strong a motive to excite your energy, as any that has hitherto called it forth."[2]

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. i., p. 387.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 29.

To this Dumont answers:

"This long stay (at Bowood) is not exactly what I should have chosen especially, as not having foreseen it when I made my arrangements, I have not brought with me the materials of my work. Nevertheless, that I may not altogether deserve your reproaches, I am cramming my head with history and am endeavouring to lay down a connected plan: I am collecting stones and sand which, if my powers do but second my wishes, may one day become an edifice.

"But of what use are books? Who can write or even think without disgust, when he sees the most enlightened country in Europe returning to a state of barbarism? The howlings of savages are less frightful than the harangues of the representatives of a nation esteemed the gentlest and the most polished of the continent. One is almost reduced to wish that the French added the vices of cowardice to those of barbarity. The courage of the people has become the instrument of the ferocity of their leaders.

"Although I condemned as strongly as you did the faction of the Gironde whilst it was attacking and pulling down the constitution, I confess to you that the dreadful vengeance taken on them by the dominant party gave me the deepest pain. I never liked Brissot as a politician; no one was ever more intoxicated by passion; but that does not prevent me from doing justice to his virtues, to his private character, to his disinterestedness, to his social qualities as a husband, a father, a friend, and as the intrepid advocate of the wretched negroes. I cannot reflect without a shudder, that he imbibed

some of the principles that led him astray from the very writings of Rousseau; and that a disposition naturally kind and good did not preserve him from the delusions of party spirit. The vanity of being looked on as a leader no doubt contributed to his faults, the weakness of his judgement hurried him into false measures, and the violence of the people did the rest. He was one of those who sincerely believed that what is called the will of the people was a justification of everything, and he has done as much mischief by the enthusiasm of Liberty, as many others have done by the enthusiasm of religion. The power of absolution assumed by the Romish Church has precisely the same hold on the consciences of men as political enthusiasm has on their understandings. I had not intended to talk to you for so long about a man you never could endure, but I had seen him in points of view different from those which made him justly blamable in your eyes; and the sad end of this man, who would have been excellent had he been born in the United States, inspires me with a feeling of compassion which prevents my seeing in his faults anything more than the effect of the general contagion of the time.

"But what are we to think of the abominable fickleness of that people who could count one after another the heads of those twenty victims as they dropped under the fatal instrument of death, without seeming to retain the slightest recollection of the applauses which for more than a year they had bestowed on them, as men whom they then looked upon as the defenders of their liberty?

"Ought not this reflection to alarm those who have directed these pretended legal executions? I trust that the ruffians that rule to-day have signed their own death warrant, but shall we ever see this brutalized people return to humanity and reason? I know not. The madness of the crusades lasted two hundred years; the present frenzy may swallow up more than one generation."[1]

Dumont's "Recollections of Mirabeau" were published after his death, and were never revised, nor did he look on them in any other light than as a sketch, which he intended later on to extend and amplify. They are really notes on events and persons which he meant to develop into a historical work of a more ambitious character. They were edited by M. Duval of Geneva, who says in his preface, "what appears to me to be the principal merit of the book, and which distinguishes it from most writings of its kind, is, that M. Dumont, a foreigner in France, always refused by a rare feeling of delicacy to take any active part in the events that were taking place before his eyes. He therefore has nothing to conceal, nor any motives to alter facts in order to represent his conduct under a more favourable light. His love of Liberty, and his great talents were the cause of his being entrusted with the knowledge of great projects and of becoming a collaborator in affairs of great importance, but only as a sympathizer."

From the time he left Paris in 1791 till 1814, he lived in London, and during this time he was the coadjutor of

[1] "Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly," vol. ii., p. 32.

Jeremy Bentham, and published eight volumes of his works on subjects connected with legislation. The Edinburgh Reviewer of the "Théories des peines et des récompenses," published in 1813, thus praises Dumont's share in the work: "It is to M. Dumont upon the present, as on a former occasion, that we are indebted for a knowledge of these valuable speculations. The greater part of them had been completed, as far as their author did complete them, above thirty years before the date of the present publication. During that long period they had lain in his repositories neglected by him or considered by him as materials for a branch of his great work on legislation. Had not the same zealous and friendly hand interposed to which we owe the 'Traité de Legislation,' this treatise would in all probability have been withheld, with the greater chance of its entire suppression, owing to the extreme fastidiousness of Mr. Bentham upon the subject of his own compositions. Happily, M. Dumont prevailed upon him to confide the materials to his care, and he has so thoroughly entered into his author's spirit, that, but for the information conveyed in the title-page, it would be difficult to imagine that the work did not contain the author's own statements of his principles. So great being M. Dumont's merits, so large indeed being his share in the execution of the work, it is only rendering him a just tribute if we dispute the title of *Rédacteur*, which his modesty inclines him to assume. He much more nearly resembles an adept delivering to the world the doctrines of the School of Philosophy to which he belongs."

Of the lighter and more social side of Dumont's character we have a charming description in Maria Edgeworth's Letters. She writes from Bowood in 1818: "Dumont read out one evening one of Corneille's plays, 'Le Florentin,' which is beautiful and was beautifully read. We asked for one of Molière, but he said to Lord Lansdowne that it was impossible to read Molière aloud without a quicker eye than he had, *pour de certains propos*; however they went to the library and brought out at last as odd a choice as could well be made, with Mr. Thomas Grenville as auditor, 'Le vieux Célibataire,' an excellent play, interesting and lively throughout, and the old bachelor himself a charming character. . . . There were things which seemed as if they were written on purpose for the *Célibataire* who was listening and the *Célibataire* who was reading."[1]

Again from Geneva, in 1820, she says, "Dumont is very kind and cordial; he seems to enjoy universal consideration here, and he loves Mont Blanc next to Bentham above all created things; I had no idea till I saw him here how much he enjoyed the beauties of nature."

Dumont died in 1829; three years previously he made his will, and began it by "thanking the Almighty for his long and happy life, which had been alternately cheered by the delights of study and by the constant intercourse with so many beloved friends."

I am only too well aware of the loss that Dumont's writ-

[1] "Life and Letters of Maria Edgeworth" (Aug. Hare), vol. i., p. 249.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 312.

ing sustains by being translated, and how feeble are these efforts to reproduce his polished and humorous style, of which Lord Macaulay says: "In the qualities in which French writers surpass those of all other nations, neatness, clearness, precision, condensation, he surpassed all French writers."

The only omissions I have made are in Chapter XVII., which I have curtailed considerably, as it contained many repetitions, and, as Dumont says in a note, required revision, and in the last chapter, in which I have left out the end, which relates solely to Genevese affairs.

In the appendix will be found two of the addresses written by Dumont for Mirabeau, and also some of Mirabeau's hurriedly scribbled notes which show the delightful and intimate friendship which prevailed between the two men.

It is, I think, of the second address that Sir Samuel Romilly wrote: "It is one of the most eloquent compositions in the French language."

ELIZABETH SEYMOUR.

THE GREAT FRENCHMAN AND THE LITTLE GENEVESE

CHAPTER I

FIRST MEETING OF MIRABEAU AND DUMONT

I HAVE lately been reading the "Annals of the French Revolution" by Bertrand de Molleville, and this book has reminded me of many events, the first movements of which were well known to me, and of celebrities with whom I was particularly intimate.

During the last ten years I have already forgotten many facts, and I fear if I wait much longer my memory of them will become very confused. My friends often beg me to write down many details which they have heard me relate in conversation, but till lately I have felt a strong disinclination to do this, as I should be obliged to put myself on the scene, though certainly more as a spectator than an actor in it. As to the part I played I can sometimes find fault with my judgement but never with my intentions. My own personality is not interesting to me. I have never thought my sayings or doings of any importance, and therefore I never kept any record of them. I allowed events of great importance to pass

by unnoticed as if they had been trifles, and did not at the time pay them the attention of which they were worthy. It is only in the retrospect that I perceive their value, and now that my memory is refreshed by this history I feel the necessity of preserving my own fugitive recollections. I cannot, therefore, better employ the leisure hours I am now spending in Bath than by making this attempt, and if, as I fear will very likely be the case, I get tired of the task I can easily give it up, or throw it all into the fire!

The Revolution of Geneva in the year 1789 was the cause of my journey to Paris. I went there with Duroverai, formerly attorney-general in Geneva, in order to take advantage of M. Necker's return to office and of the consequent condition of affairs in France.

We had two objects in view, one, to restore to Geneva her complete liberty by destroying the guarantee which only allowed her to make laws under the approbation of the guaranteeing Powers; the other, was to fill in the rough sketch of a constitution which had been hurriedly undertaken by the Genevese Revolution.

The popular party had been content to recover part of the rights that had been taken from them in 1782. The councils had ceded some of the usurped powers but had the skill to retain others. The Genevese who were in London were far from satisfied with this arrangement. The clause with which they were most dissatisfied was the one in which the exiles though allowed to return to their country were, however, not replaced in their posts and dignities.

Assemblies were held, in which, as I had left Geneva by my own wish, I could speak more freely in favour of the exiles than they could do themselves. My ideas of Liberty had been still further enlarged by my sojourn in England, and by the prevailing tone of all the French publications of the time. I was one of the most active members of our Genevese Assemblies. I took on myself the task of correcting, or rather of composing, all the memoranda that we published on the new code of Geneva. My writings were well received, but Duroverai, who had just arrived from Ireland, persuaded me that they would produce much more effect if they were published in Paris, and that it would be advisable to anticipate the consent of the Powers in order to give solidity to this new arrangement.

But it is not of Genevese affairs that I now wish to write, only it is necessary to know what was my object in going to Paris in order to explain the friendships I made there, and to show that it was by a chain of circumstances dependent on this first object that I found myself mixed up in the French Revolution. But before beginning, as my principal recollections are about Mirabeau, I must relate the origin of my acquaintance with him.

In 1788 I had stayed for the two months of August and September in Paris with my friend Mr. Romilly, of London. Romilly belongs to a French refugee family who settled in England after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, an event of which he never spoke without blessing the memory of Louis XIV., by whose doing it was that he was born an

Englishman. He had studied law, and preferred practising in the Court of Chancery, where, however, it is not so easy to gain success as on the King's Bench. While Mirabeau was in London in 1784, he had become very intimate with Romilly. He was then occupied with his book on the Order of Cincinnatus and several other works of which he had the plans and sketches in his portfolio, and about which he took pains to consult anyone who could enlighten him. He was poor then, and had to work for his living. He wrote his "Considerations sur l'Escaut" on the model of a letter of M. Chauvet's, which gave him the first idea of such a work.

He came across a book on geography, of which I have forgotten the name, and conceived the idea of a universal Gazetteer, and if anyone had given him the elements of a Chinese grammar, I believe he would have written a treatise on this language. He studied a subject and wrote a book on it at the same time; all he required was a collaborator who would furnish him with facts, and he knew how to employ twenty others for additions and notes, and would have undertaken to write an encyclopaedia if he had been well paid for it.

His activity was immense, but he did not work much himself, he made other people work; he had the great art of discovering hidden talent and of flattering those who might be useful to him; he accomplished this by exercising every insinuating art, and by feigning interest in the public welfare. Whenever he had need of me he used to say pleasant things

to me about my friends, and speak to me about Geneva; it had the the effect of a "Ranz des vaches" on me, and I was always subjugated by it. His interesting and animated conversation was like a whetstone on which he sharpened his tools. Nothing ever escaped him. He collected with care anecdotes and conversations, and appropriated the thoughts, studies and reading of his friends; he knew how to use what he had just learned as if he had always known it, and once having put his hand to anything, it advanced rapidly. In London he had made friends with D..... who was then writing the history of the revolutions of Geneva, of which the first volume was already published. D..... did not wish his name to appear as the author of this work, he therefore begged Mirabeau to take charge of his manuscripts, and to write the history of Geneva. In less than eight days Mirabeau showed him the epitome he had made of the first volume; this forcible and interesting abstract was evidently the work of a master.

I do not know for what reason D..... changed his mind, but he refused to let him have any more of his manuscript. There was therefore much coolness, or more than coolness between them. These two men were not suited to work together; Mirabeau announced that he desired a subordinate position and that he wished the credit of the work to belong to D....., but he knew pretty well that his own reputation would absorb that of his partner, and that D..... would only be considered as the mason who provided the stones and mortar for the edifice of which Mirabeau was to be the architect.

When we arrived in Paris in 1788, the Comte de Mirabeau's reputation was as low as possible. He had been employed at Berlin by M. de Calonne, he was associated with all the enemies of M. Necker; he had written against him, and was looked on as a dangerous enemy and an insecure friend. His lawsuit with his family, his adventures with women, his imprisonments, his manners, were all more than could be pardoned even in a town as little particular as Paris. His name was only pronounced with contempt in the respectable houses where we were most intimate. Romilly was almost ashamed of his old friendship and resolved not to renew his acquaintance with him. We therefore did not see him, but he was not a man to stand on ceremony or to pay attention to etiquette. We had dined with Target, whom he sometimes saw, and having heard from him where we were lodging, it was quite enough for him. The noise of a carriage at the door of the hotel drove Romilly to his room, and he begged me to say he was out if it was only an ordinary visitor. When, therefore, the Comte de Mirabeau was announced, I thought that Romilly would rather not be there, as he did not wish to renew his acquaintance with him, and also, as his room was only separated by a very thin partition, he could have distinguished the Count's voice and could have come in if he had wished to do so. Mirabeau began the conversation on the subject of our many friends in common in London; he then spoke to me about Geneva, and knowing that a Genevese is never tired of talking of his country, he spoke in the most flattering way about this

town which has furnished so many distinguished men and has contributed such a large contingent of genius and brilliancy to the world, and he added that he should never be happy till he had broken the chains which had bound Geneva since the revolution of 1782. Two hours of such conversation passed like a moment, and Mirabeau represented in my eyes everything that was most interesting in Paris. The visit ended by my promising to dine with him the same evening, even in case Romilly should be engaged elsewhere, and in order to make sure of me he was to return and fetch me in his carriage.

"To whom were you talking for so long?" said Romilly to me, on leaving his room, where he had been kept a prisoner during this long visit.—"Did you not recognize his voice?"—"No."—"Well, it's a man you know well, and you might have heard remarks about yourself which would have served for a splendid funeral oration."—"Why, was it Mirabeau?"—"Mirabeau himself, and I should be a fool if my friends' prejudices prevented my seeing him. A foreigner can form friendships with whom he likes, I do not follow either Calonne or Necker, but the man whose conversation pleases me and stimulates me, and the first thing I am going to do is to dine with him to-night." Mirabeau shortly returned and carried us both off, and he so surmounted our first prejudices that we saw him frequently, and, taking advantage of the fine weather, we made several excursions together which I recollect with great pleasure. We dined at the Bois de Boulogne, at Saint-Cloud, at Vincennes,

where he showed us the dungeon in which he was imprisoned for three years.

I never knew any man who could, when he liked, make himself as agreeable and attractive as Mirabeau. He was what is called good company in every meaning of the term; pleasant, easy, full of gaiety, resource, and different kinds of wit. You could never be reserved with him, but were obliged to be intimate and to forego all ceremony and ordinary modes of address. Though he greatly valued his title of Count, and, at the bottom of his heart, attached a great deal of importance to nobility, he had yet wit enough to discern the occasions on which you should make use of it or should make a merit of voluntarily abdicating it. Use of titles, which has been well compared to wadding that is put between vases to prevent their breaking, always keeps up a sort of distance, and prevents any real intimacy between friends. He would have none of it. His first care was to remove all such barriers, and an intimacy with him had a sort of agreeable tartness and crudity which was more apparent than real, and all the essence of politeness and flattery was to be found under a rude and even sometimes coarse exterior. After society conversations, which were more or less stiff, one found a piquant novelty in his which never became commonplace or formal. His stay in Berlin had furnished him with curious anecdotes, but his scandalous letters were not yet published. At this moment, a work of his was appearing on the Prussian Monarchy, that is to say, it was the work of Major Mauvillon, and consisted of ex-

tracts of memoirs that he took great trouble to procure. No one could imagine that during a visit of a few months he could give enough time to the composition of an eight volume work in which he had collected all that concerned the administration of the kingdom. But he had employed the talents of an officer who was hardly known by his own government, and the Prussian Ministers must have been surprised that a man who had only just appeared in this country should have the boldness to undertake alone such a formidable enterprise, and to be in possession of more knowledge than was to be found in the offices of their departments. He showed in this work that the principles of Adam Smith were justified by facts, and that Prussia had never neglected them without suffering for it.

This was the moment of the quarrel between M. de Calonne and M. Necker on the question of the deficit. The former had his reasons for trying to thrust on some one else the burden of this affair. He had just accused M. Necker of having deceived the Nation by the statement that, on his leaving the Ministry, instead of a deficit, there was a surplus of ten millions. His pamphlet, bristling with calculations and specious arguments, had produced a considerable effect. M. Necker, who had just entered the government, gave notices of his reply. Before it even appeared, Mirabeau was prepared to refute it. M. Necker's enemies had met at the house of Panchaud, the banker, an intelligent man, very clever at finance, but who was ruined more in reputation than in money by a very suspicious bankruptcy. As soon

as M. Necker's work was published, the Committee met every day; Mirabeau went there to collect evidence to arm him against the government; he spoke in advance of the certainty of obtaining a complete triumph. Nothing would content him but to unmask the charlatan, to turn him inside out and to lay him at Calonne's feet convicted of lies and incapacity. Gradually this enthusiasm died out; he spoke no more of it and did not even like it to be mentioned. I often asked him why this grand production did not appear, and what made him spare the charlatan who rejoiced in a borrowed reputation, and why the Panchaud Committee had postponed this great act of justice. In order to dispose of these reproaches, which reflected on his previous bombastical swagger, he at last told me that M. Necker was necessary for the formation of the States General, which needed his popularity, and that the question of the deficit was absorbed in that of the double representation of the third estate.

This was enough to make me sure that M. Necker's reply had been triumphant, and that his most ardent enemies, after having put their heads in this noose, had not been able to draw back.

We went with Mercier, the author of the "Tableau de Paris," and Mallet-Dupan to visit the horrible surroundings of the Salpétrière and of Bicêtre. I never saw anything more dreadful, and these two establishments at the gates of the capital showed the irresponsibility of a frivolous society. The hospital was the germ of every illness, and the prison

the school of every crime. Romilly, profoundly touched by this, wrote a most striking description of these institutions of misery in a letter to a friend. I mentioned this to Mirabeau, who wished to see it, and having seen it, it was the affair of a day to translate and publish it in a small volume, to which he added an anonymous writing on the penal laws of England. The work was announced as a translation from the English by the Comte de Mirabeau, but the public, accustomed to little disguises of this sort, never doubted that he was himself the author. The success was rapid, and the profit covered his expenses for a month. He had a great reputation as a writer, but if all those who contributed to his works had taken back their share, Mirabeau's part would only have consisted of a certain art of arrangement of the striking features, of biting epigrams, and some virile eloquence which, however, was not that of the French Academy. Clavière provided the foundation for his letter to the new King of Prussia; de Bourges composed his address to the Batavians, and I was witness to the hot disputes between them about this writing. Mirabeau did not deny the debt, but de Bourges, after its success, was furious at having sacrificed himself for another's fame. Mirabeau had so established himself in public opinion that none of his colleagues could have diminished his reputation. He had the right to consider himself as the parent of all these writings because he presided at their achievement, and, without his indefatigable activity, they would never have seen the light of day.

Clavière was as much piqued as anyone else at only serving as a pedestal for the statue of Mirabeau, and he had attached to himself Brissot de Warville, and collaborated with him. Mirabeau treated Brissot as a literary jockey, spoke of him pityingly, but had a high opinion of Clavière and wished to be friendly with him. There was no open rupture between them, but much irritation. Clavière wanted to treat Mirabeau as a jay despoiled of his plumes, but the jay, though he might have lost his borrowed finery, was still armed with a very powerful spur and could fly far above all these literary barn-door fowls.

Mirabeau introduced us to Dupont de Nemours and Champfort. Dupont, who had revised "Ephemerides du Citoyen," and who was a zealous friend of Turgot's, enjoyed the reputation of an honest man and a wise economist, but he had made himself rather ridiculous when he modestly complained of being in correspondence with four or five kings! One morning, we found him occupied with a work on "Leather," in which he showed that the government was always altering duties on this commodity. "This work," he said, "will be more amusing than any romance"; and, as an example, he read us seven or eight chapters of deadly dulness, but he made up for it by telling some anecdotes of the Assembly and of notabilities to whom he had acted as secretary. He quoted a saying which has had a great success; it was a question of tithes: "Tithes," said the Archbishop of Aix, in a sentimental tone, "are the voluntary offering made by the piety of the faithful."—"Tithes," re-

plied the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, in his simple and modest manner, which made the remark all the more to the point, "tithes, the voluntary offerings of the pious faithful, on which there are now proceeding forty thousand lawsuits in the kingdom."

Champfort and Mirabeau were on terms of ceremony with each other. Champfort, though affecting an extraordinary independence of character, was intimate with many distinguished people in the court circle, especially with M. de Vaudreuil; he still made a merit of being unattached in any way to high places or people. He wished to pass for a misanthropist, but his misanthropy was that of pride and was only shown by his wit; while others wished to attack the colossus with a battering-ram, he tried to riddle it by satire. I knew Champfort afterwards, I often met him, and never saw in his revolutionary passion anything except wounded pride which was only happy in attempting to put down any authority which had given him offence. He hated the institution of matrimony because he was a natural son, and he abused everything connected with the Court, for fear that he should be thought to be one of its protégés.

But we had other society besides that of Mirabeau, and in that company it was not well to dwell on our acquaintance with him. The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, for example, M. de Malesherbes, M. de Lafayette, Mr. Jefferson, the American Minister, Mallet du Pan, the Abbé Morellet and many other less known people. Conversation with them was less frivolous. The approaching convocation of the States

General, the importance of public events, questions of liberty, the approach of a crisis which must influence the fate of the nation, all these were new subjects in Paris, and excited divers opinions, and produced an excitement which, though still quiescent, gave a lively interest to society. Everyone was plunged in the uncertainty of the future, and viewed it according to their hopes or fears, but in the upper classes nobody was indifferent to it, and even the masses began to be excited without knowing why.

These two months' stay in Paris were so busy, the society was so varied, the days so well occupied from morning to night, that I lived more fully during this short interval than I did in years of quieter times. I owed most of the welcome and hospitality, of which we were the objects, to my travelling companion. I was under his auspices, and though he was the one who was sought after, I was not forgotten. I was proud of him, and when I saw him appreciated, I was all the more delighted. I do not know how we managed to get in all we did in such a short time. Romilly, though always calm and quiet, was incessantly active; he never wasted a minute, and was like the hand of a watch which never stops though its movement is not seen.

At the time I now write (1799), I see him burdened with work in the most laborious of professions, and though one of the busiest of advocates, he still finds time to read all the important books that appear, to keep up his acquaintance with the classics, to see much society and not to appear overdone with it all. Economy of time is a virtue I have

never possessed, and my days roll by without leaving a trace.

Mirabeau accompanied us till we left for Chantilly, where we spent a very agreeable day making plans to see each other again and to keep up a correspondence, which, however, was not achieved. He was full of projects concerning the States General, he foresaw the difficulties there would be about his election, but he aspired to be one of the members of the third estate, and had a presentiment that he would play a great part, and that his rank would only add to his popularity. I will here give a proof of his literary activity. He gave me a detailed and numbered list of subjects which we had occasionally discussed and on which we held different opinions. It was headed: "List of Articles which Dumont promises 'honour bright' to write and to send to Mirabeau shortly after his return to London." For example, "Divers Anecdotes on his Stay in Russia," "Biographical Anecdotes concerning several celebrated Genevese," "Views on National Education," etc., etc. There were eighteen of them; a proof of his attention and memory. He wished to form a depository of this sort, and, at his leisure, to arrange the material he received from all sources. He would have liked nothing better than to be an Information Bureau for the universe. He knew how to adapt himself to all tastes, and if he was not virtuous himself, he at all events preferred men of strict principles, whose habits contrasted with his own. It was his way to avow frankly all the faults and passions of his youth, to express regret for all the errors

he had committed, and to announce that for the future he meant to retrieve his past by employing his talents in the most useful way for the cause of liberty and humanity, without the possibility of any personal interest making him swerve from this career. Even through his disordered life, he had kept a certain distinction and dignity with a vigour of character which marked him out from all the unimportant nonentities who were to be found in Paris; one was tempted to excuse him by the circumstances in which he was placed, and to think his virtues were his own and his vices a stranger's. I never knew a man who was more anxious for the esteem of those he himself esteemed, and who could be more influenced by a feeling of honour; but, as will be seen later on, there was nothing stable or uniform about him.

Now that I have told the origin of my association with Mirabeau, I return to the story of the journey we undertook in 1789 with M. Duroverai, by which we hoped to profit by the re-entry of M. Necker into the Ministry, in order to improve the fate of the Genevese exiles.

CHAPTER II

OPENING OF THE STATES GENERAL

DURING our journey from London to Paris there occurred the following circumstance. There was great activity going on concerning the election of members to the "baillages." These primary assemblies composed of bourgeois and peasants had no idea how to organize and manage an election.

We were breakfasting at Montreuil-sur-mer and talking with our landlord, who told us of the tumults and confusion of their meetings.

Two or three days had already been lost in talk and confusion, and there was no idea amongst them of such things as presidents, secret voting papers or scrutiny—all that was unknown. As a passing amusement we were tempted to become legislators for Montreuil, so we asked for paper, pens, and ink, and we occupied ourselves in correcting the small regulations concerning the nomination of the members. Never was work undertaken more lightly; it was continually interrupted by roars of laughter. At last the business was concluded, we called our landlord and explained our code to him. Our bourgeois, delighted to

find himself a personage, implored us to let him have the paper, assuring us that he would manage it all right. We should have much liked to stop one day and assist at this assembly in order to see the first buddings of Democracy, but we were in too great a hurry to do so. What was pleasant, was that on arriving at Paris we saw in the papers that the Montreuil assembly had finished its election first and had received much praise for the order it had established.

This little episode is not so insignificant as it appears; it shows the carelessness and ignorance of a government which, in decreeing such an unusual thing as an election by the people, had not thought of accompanying the law by any code of rules to prevent confusion and disputes.

As soon as we arrived in Paris we obtained an audience of M. Necker, and we saw at once that the question of guarantee for Geneva would not be an easy one to conclude, that the King would neither approve nor reverse the edict of 1782 nor risk giving a refusal to an arrangement consented to by both parties. The affair dragged on slowly, and I passed several weeks at Surêne, in Clavière's country house, where I worked at my "address to the citizens of Geneva." I was helped in this work by Clavière, Duroverai, and Reybaz, who was my Aristarchus as regards style; it was my apprenticeship in the art of writing, at least on political affairs.

It was published and sent to Geneva two or three months afterwards.

Clavière's house was the rendezvous of several people who played a great part in the Revolution; Mirabeau and Brissot being the most conspicuous. I was acquainted with everything that was passing in Paris, I often went there for a day or two, I had friendships which I had made during my first visit. I was introduced to M. de la Rochefoucauld, to M. de Lafayette, and to M. de Malesherbes, and since then I became particularly intimate with the Bishop of Chartres, where I often saw the Abbé Sieyes. I frequented the houses of M. Delessert, of Mallet du Pan, of the doctor de la Roche, of M. Bidderman and of M. Reybaz, but during the months of March and April I was generally at Surêne, occupied with my writing, and not thinking much of the approaching meeting of the States General.

I remember, however, being at several committees which were held at the houses of Brissot and Clavière, where they discussed the question of revising the declaration of right and the principles on which the States General were to work. I was only a spectator, and I always came away with a feeling of disgust at all the idle talk. But the opening scene would be so important that I was anxious to find myself anywhere where there were things to observe. I did not hear any interesting speeches, but the liberal sentiments expressed were unanimous. Every one was full of cordiality and enthusiam. I was thrilled to find myself in the midst of this nation just beginning to emerge from its circle of frivolities in order to rise to nobler things. The French, for whom I had a feeling of contempt arising from my repub-

lican education and which had been strengthened by my residence in England, now appeared in another aspect; I began to look on them as freed men, and I agreed with all the sentiments of the most zealous adherents of the third estate. I had not thought much about the questions that were now dividing French opinion, I had let myself be carried away by my liberal sentiments, but I did not extend my views beyond an imitation of the English government, which I looked on as the finest model for political institutions. I never spoke at any of these assemblies if there were more than our ordinary friends present. I thought it improper for a stranger to do so, and a natural shyness helped me to sustain this reserve.

Duroverai, more accustomed than I was to public meetings, and endowed with oratorical talent which would have put him in the first rank in their committees, kept as a rule the same silence, and had no ambition to play a distinguished part in them, which, however, he could easily have done.

At one of these meetings, different points were being proposed, and we were astonished to hear Palissot ask that one of them should be the right of representation. We Genevese never doubted that by that was meant the right of representation in the government.

He, however, added that this essential right, which was one of the most precious of liberties, was at this moment violated in the most open manner by the government in refusing M. Chenier the permission to represent his tragedy

of Charles IX. We were thus enlightened as to the nature of the right of representation claimed by M. Palissot. Our mistake made us smile, and some one came and whispered in my ear: "You see that with the French everything begins and ends with the stage."

I can only remember what I saw at this time as a chaos of confused opinions. There was no regular stream of public opinion except against the court and what was called the aristocracy. Necker was the divinity of the moment. Sieyes, though little known by the people, had furnished by his writings rallying points for all those who wished to speak on public affairs. Rabaud de Saint-Etienne and Target had each a reputation equal to that of the Abbé Sieyes. Those who contemplated a civil war looked on Lafayette as a man who aspired to be the Washington of France. These were the men of most mark at this time.

The Duc de la Rochefoucauld's home was distinguished by its simplicity, the purity of its tone, its liberty of principles and independence of court influence; it united the principal members of the nobility who had declared in favour of the people by the double representations of the third estate and of manhood suffrage. Condorcet, Dupont, Lafayette, the Duc de Liancourt, were the principal personages in this society. Their dominating idea was to give France a constitution. Those of the nobles and princes who wished to preserve and fortify the old constitution of the States General were really the aristocratic party against whom there was a general exasperation; but though the clamour

was great it was not directed against a great number of individuals.

The bulk of the nation, even in Paris, looked upon the States General as a means for diminishing taxes; the state bondholders, so often exposed to the violation of the public debt, looked on them as a bulwark against bankruptcy. The deficit had made them tremble, they foresaw their ruin, and they warmly welcomed the hope of giving to the public revenues a settled basis. Besides this there were many opposing interests; the nobility had within itself an aristocracy and a democracy, the Church the same, and also the third estate. It is impossible to depict the confusion of ideas, the disordered imaginations, the burlesque of popular notions, the apprehensions, the hopes, the passions, of all parties. One could have imagined it resembled the world on the day after the Creation, as remarked the Comte de Lauraguais, and as if all the population divided in interests, and enemies of each other, wished to sort and arrange themselves as if no past had ever existed or had to be considered in making provision for the future. I witnessed in Paris the sectional assemblies for the nomination of electors, though orders were issued only to admit the inhabitants of the district, but this order was not enforced; after the first few minutes anyone who presented himself in decent clothes could pass in. In several districts there was difficulty in assembling a sufficient number of people. The Paris bourgeois was astonished at the novelty and a little frightened at the sentries placed at the doors of the assemblies and

preferred staying at home, at all events till the first day was over. I was in the division of the Filles St. Thomas which was a central quarter occupied by the most wealthy class. For a long time there were only two hundred individuals present. The difficulty of commencing was extreme, the noise dreadful, everyone on their feet and talking together, the best efforts of the President only obtaining two minutes of silence. There were many other difficulties concerning the taking and counting of votes.

All this gave me some curious impressions of this infancy of Democracy. Men of pretension wished to speak in order to make themselves known, and to be known in order to be elected. One saw the first intriguing attempts to make the nominations fall on members of their own party. There was no list of candidates, everyone was called to choose everyone else. It was impossible to obtain an actual majority for anyone, it was necessary to repeat and repeat the voting till at last the result was obtained.

The assembly of electors was just as disorderly and slow in its proceedings as the district assemblies. The States General were to assemble at Versailles several days before the Paris deputations were nominated. It is remarkable that the Abbé Sieyes was the last member elected. I think he was the only ecclesiastic nominated by the third estate. What a strange fate it was that the man who had given the most impulse to the States General, who had more influence than anyone else in their formation, had no place in this Assembly.

This Paris election was the last to take place in the kingdom. This arose, I think, owing to a dispute as to its procedure, some people saying that the election ought to be conducted by the three orders joined together, others saying that they were to be kept separate. In the course of this dispute Duval d'Esprémenil, who was supposed to be a partisan of the third estate, declared himself in favour of the retention of privileges, and the Comte de Lauraguais said pleasantly to him, "Oh, M. Duval, I don't wish to prevent your being noble, if only you will allow me to be a bourgeois of Paris."

I was not at Versailles at the opening of the States General, but I went there a few days afterwards; the three orders were openly quarrelling as to the "verification of Powers." The third estate wished this verification to be made in common, the two other orders persisted in making them separate; this question was apparently a small one, but the real object was far from small. The third estate wished to force the other two orders to join them, so as to make one single assembly where they were sure of having the majority. They remained immovable, resisted all temptations to put the question to the test, and made it appear that the nobility and clergy were the obstinate ones, which roused against them the temper of the masses.

It was a mistake of the government to leave this question undecided. If the King had commanded the union he would have had the third estate on his side; if he had ordered the separation of the three chambers the nobles and clergy

would have been for him. They would not have dared to open the States General in flagrant disobedience to the King, who was looked upon as the provisional legislator. But in taking no decided part it left the question open to the combatants, and the royal authority would become the booty of the conquerors. I saw how this time of inaction helped to inflame party spirit. The third estate made daily progress till it arrived at the point of issuing distinct commands to the other two orders, and on their refusal to obey, constituted themselves into a National Assembly. All the germs of disorder were sown during this interval. The historian of the Revolution ought to give particular attention to this epoch.

When I visited the States General there was neither any subject of deliberation before it, nor any order whatever; the members did not know each other, though they were beginning to do so; they sat in any place they liked. They had chosen the elder ones to preside, and they passed the day in waiting about, in debating little incidents, in hearing the news of the day, and in teaching the provincial members to get accustomed to Versailles. The room was continually flooded with visitors, with inquisitive people walking about and even invading the circle intended for members only, but without any objection on their part or thought of claiming their privileges. It is true that as they were not yet constituted, they looked on themselves more as being members of a club than as forming a political Assembly.

CHAPTER III

MIRABEAU'S POSITION. THE ABBÉ SIEYES

AT once found the man I was looking for —Mirabeau. In a long conversation I had with him, I perceived that he was embittered with everyone, and that he was in open hostility with most of the representatives from Provence. I knew afterwards that he had passed through some humiliating scenes. At the roll call of members, several well-known names were received with applause. Mounier, Chapelin, Rabaud de Saint-Etienne, and many others, had received these flattering marks of approbation, but at the name of Mirabeau there was a murmur of a very different sort, it was 'booing,' instead of cheering. This contemptuous insult showed him in what his celebrity consisted, and it was thought possible that his election might be declared illegal when the verification of the writs of return came to be discussed. His manœuvres in connection with his elections at Aix and Marseilles would certainly be exposed in order to annul his double nomination, and he himself felt the futility of his Marseilles election, and preferred to be returned by the electors of Aix, though it would have been more flattering to him to be the representative of one of the largest and most import-

ant towns of the kingdom. He had wished to speak on two or three occasions, but a general murmur had prevented his being heard. It was in this condition of spite and temper that he published the two first numbers of a journal, which he called "The States General." It was a sort of caricature of the Assembly; he compared the members with noisy school-boys indulging in indecent and servile rollicking, and he attacked M. Necker violently, though he was then the idol of the nation. The government had commanded the suppression of this anonymous publication; Mirabeau, more excited than discouraged by the prohibition, announced the publication under his own name as the "Letters to his Constituents," and no one dared to dispute the right of a representative of the people to give an account of the public sittings of the Assembly.

With the friendship I had for Mirabeau, and the high idea I had formed of his talents, I could not, without chagrin, see him so out of favour. It would probably be the cause of his doing as much harm as he might otherwise have done good. I listened to all his complaints, to all his abuse of the Assembly; he lavished every expression of contempt on its members, and predicted that everything would be lost owing to their vanity and jealousy. He believed, or pretended to believe, that he was "ostracised" on account of his superior talents, but he meant to impress on the Assembly the fact that he was a power with which it must reckon, that the Nation held him of account, and that his influence would be a weight in the balance.

In the midst of all these explosions of anger and bravado, I could easily perceive that he was genuinely grieved, and tears of vexation were in his eyes. I chose a favourable moment to soothe his wounded pride, and represented to him frankly that his first appearance had offended everyone; that there was nothing more disadvantageous for a member who wished to aspire to a high place than to be the editor of a newspaper, and that to criticise the Assembly was certainly not the way to make himself popular, that if, like me, he had lived in a Republic, he would understand the give and take of different parties, and would not give way so hurriedly to despair; that he ought to ignore all the mediocre and second-rate nonentities, who would eventually extinguish themselves and sink to their proper level; that he must think of himself as an actor in the greatest theatre in the world; that the Assembly provided him with the only means of attaining glory; that all the little mortifications that he had experienced would be more than compensated for by one day of success, and that if he wished to acquire a durable influence, he must work on a new plan. This long conversation, which took place in the Trianon Gardens, had a great effect. Mirabeau, who was extremely sensible to kindness, softened gradually and had no difficulty in owning his mistakes. At the end of the interview, he let me see a letter to his constituents which he was going to print. We read it together; it was bitter, but less so than formerly. We passed an hour or two in remodelling it, and in entirely changing its tone.

He even consented to praise some of the members, and to present the Assembly under a more favourable aspect.

Besides this, he agreed not to be in a hurry to speak, but to wait till some brilliant opportunity should arise.

Mirabeau was only slightly acquainted with Duroverai, though he appreciated his talents. The latter's experience in the conduct of political affairs in Geneva, his accurate knowledge of law, the art of discussion, which he possessed in a high degree, and the knowledge of the routine work of popular assemblies; all these things made an intimacy with Duroverai very valuable for Mirabeau. He took him in some ways as his mentor, and consulted him on any important undertaking. We were lodging at Versailles in the Hôtel Charost; Clavière, who often came from Paris to visit the Assembly, used to come to us. He had become intimate with Mirabeau, and very often came to the hotel, where, from time to time, we received a few friends united by a common sympathy, including our compatriot, M. Reybaz. We had tried to put him in relation with Mirabeau, but for a long time it was difficult for them to amalgamate. Reybaz, with his frigidity, repelled the most flattering advances, but he at last gave in and became one of his most active fellow workers. But this was some months later, when the Assembly was in Paris and Mirabeau was taking a leading part in it. I saw several important measures prepared in this little committee; I can speak all the more freely about them as I was more of a spectator than an actor, never having mixed myself up in political affairs, and not having the smallest ambition

to play a rôle in them. I had also such a high idea of the talents of Duroverai and of Clavière, that I generally agreed with them. I was useful in preventing stormy disputes between them, and managed to calm them when their different passions, which I never shared, were opposed to each other. Duroverai, with many amiable qualities, had some asperities of temper, and often treated Mirabeau as a rebellious school boy. Clavière, who aspired to be Finance Minister, was in a hurry to act, and did not lend himself willingly to Duroverai's plan of uniting Mirabeau and Necker, and, by their coalition, forcing the Assembly on its onward path. Duroverai knew M. Mallouet, who was intimate with M. Necker and who had rendered some services to the representatives of Geneva. We dined with Mallouet pretty often, and it was there that he made Duroverai feel the necessity of arranging an interview between Mirabeau and M. Necker. Objections were not wanting to this; could he be trusted? Would he co-operate with a minister? Would not M. Necker be compromised? Duroverai had an answer for everything. M. de Montmorin was consulted, the conference took place, and Mirabeau, who had never seen M. Necker, spoke to us about him, on his return from the interview, as a good man to whom it was a great mistake to attribute either malice or a designing disposition. However, the interview was not altogether barren; there was some question of an embassy being given to Mirabeau after the conclusion of the Assembly. It was to have been that of Constantinople, and was even supposed to have been promised by the King. This promise

was to remain a secret, but I think Mirabeau, who was the least discreet of men, confided it to seven or eight people. But the subsequent turn of affairs, and the great influence achieved by Mirabeau, lifted him far above an embassy, and put him much more in the position of dictating conditions than of receiving them. At this time, when no one foresaw the duration of the States General, still less the destruction of the Monarchy, this project pleased him very much; he wished to make me Secretary of Embassy, and was already meditating writing an Ottoman encyclopaedia.

But before this circumstance, I must recount Mirabeau's first triumph in the Assembly. I was all the more interested in it, as the event was connected with Duroverai, and, during its progress, I passed from the most terrible anxiety to the greatest joy. Duroverai was sitting in the chamber, with several members of his acquaintance, and passed a pencil note to Mirabeau on the affair being discussed at the moment. M——, who was one of the most terrible prosers in the Assembly, witnessed this, and asked his neighbour who the stranger was who passed round notes and appeared to mix himself up in their affairs. The answer he received only increased his excitement; he burst into speech and denounced, in a voice of thunder, the stranger exiled from his country, a refugee and pensioner of the English Government, who came to take part in their deliberations, and who was sitting amongst them sending notes to their members; and he announced that he had himself witnessed these manœuvres. The murmur which rose from all parts of the

Chamber would have appeared less dreadful to me if it had foretold an earthquake. Confused voices arose, "Who is he? What is he? We must know at once." Fifty people began to talk together, but Mirabeau's compelling voice imposed silence; he declared that he would himself reveal the identity of the stranger, and denounce him to the Assembly. "This exile," he said, "this pensioner of the English Government, is M. Duroverai of Geneva; but you must know that the respectable man you have been insulting has been a martyr for liberty in his own country, that, as Advocate-General of the Republic, he earned, by his zeal for the defence of its citizens, the indignation of our despots; that a "lettre de cachet" issued by M. de Vergennes deprived him of the office of magistrate, which he had so well filled, and that when this town was placed under the yoke of the aristocracy, he obtained the honour of being exiled. Know, therefore, that the crime of this enlightened citizen was that of having prepared a liberal code, in which all odious and unfair privileges were to disappear."

The impression of this speech, delivered in a noble and striking tone, was immediate and universal. Applause started from all sides of the Chamber, such force and dignity had not yet been heard in the tumultuous sittings of the Commons; it was a new joy, for eloquence has the greatest of charms for men assembled together. Mirabeau felt this first success most thoroughly. Duroverai was surrounded by members, who came up to him, wishing, by their civility to make up to him for the insult he had received. It was in

this way that this denunciation, which had frozen me with horror, became a source of lively satisfaction, all the more so, as it could not fail to produce in Geneva a great effect for the restoration of our exiles. One can understand that this courageous onslaught in the cause of justice and friendship was not lost on us, and that we were still further linked together by gratitude for it. If Mirabeau had always served the cause of the public as well as he did that of his friend, and if he had acted with the same generous zeal in silencing other calumnies which issued from the Tribune, he would have become the saviour of France. I have not many recollections of this first phase of the Assembly, but I must not forget that on this occasion the man, who afterwards acquired a fatal celebrity, made his first success. The clergy, who wished to secure by a surprise movement the re-union of the three Orders, had sent to the Commons the Archbishop of Aix, who delivered a pathetic speech on the misfortunes of the people and the misery in general in the country. He produced a piece of black bread which even animals would have refused to eat, to which he said the poor were reduced. He invited the Commons to send some of their members to confer with those of the clergy and nobility, to see if some means could not be devised to ameliorate the fate of these unfortunate people. The Commons, who wished to keep their independence of action, saw the trap, but did not dare to reject openly a proposition, the refusal of which would compromise them in the eyes of the multitude. One member rose to speak, and even went

beyond the Prelate in favour of the indigent classes, but he cleverly threw doubt on the general intentions of the clergy.

"Go," he said to the Archbishop, "and tell your colleagues that if they are in such a hurry to help the people, they should come to this Chamber, to the friends of the people, tell them no longer to retard our operations by their pretended delays, tell them no longer to employ little tricks to make us abandon the resolutions we have agreed to, and above all, you ministers of religion, worthy imitators of your Master, renounce all the luxury by which you are surrounded, and all the display which wounds the feelings of the poor. Regain your original state of simplicity; send away the conceited lacqueys who escort you; sell your superb equipages, and convert all this vile surperfluity into food for the poor!"

At this speech, which was so well suited to the passions of the moment, there arose, not a torrent of applause, which would have been a bravado, but a confused murmur, which was more flattering. Everyone asked who was the orator; he was not known, and it was only after some minutes of investigation that a name was repeated from mouth to mouth which, three years later, was destined to make France tremble. It was that of Robespierre. Reybaz, who was sitting next me, said, "This young man is not yet experienced, he is too verbose, and does not know when to stop, but he has a fund of eloquence and originality which will not be lost in the crowd."

I had made the acquaintance of several members, and

often dined with the Bishop of Chartres, to whom I had been introduced by Brissot and Clavière. I saw there the Abbé Sieyes, who was his deputy, but I never made much acquaintance with him; he was a very absent-minded man, not frank or genial, and it was not easy to be on familiar terms with him; he gave his opinion, but did not enter into discussions; if one objected to them, he said no more. His writings had given him a decided reputation, he was looked on as the oracle of the third estate and the most redoubtable enemy of all privileges. He easily lost his temper, and appeared to have a most profound contempt for the existing orders of society. I thought that this friend of liberty ought to love the English and would agree with me about them, but I saw with surprise that the whole English Constitution seemed to him a quack remedy, meant to impose on the populace. He appeared to listen to me with pity when I explained to him the modifications of this system, the reciprocal give and take, the hidden springs, the real, though apparently concealed, dependence on each other of all these three parties which constituted the legislature. In his eyes, all crown influence must be venal, all opposition only a backstairs trick. The only thing he liked in England was the trial by jury, but he understood it very incompletely, and, like all Frenchmen, had formed false ideas about it; in one word, it was clear that he looked on the English as children in regard to these matters, and that he thought he was competent to give a much better constitution to France. I must not forget one most characteristic anecdote about

the Abbé Sieyes. One day, after having breakfasted with M. de Talleyrand, we were walking together in the Tuileries gardens; the Abbé was more talkative and communicative than usual. He was in a most confidential and familiar mood, and after having spoken of many of his writings and studies he gave out this striking sentiment, "The science of Government is one that I think I have mastered." If he had even touched the fringe of the question, or had had the smallest conception of the extent and difficulties of creating a perfect legislation, he could not possibly have held this language. Such presumption was in his case, as in all others, a sure sign of ignorance. The Bishop of Chartres and M. Lasseney informed me as to Sieyes' habits and studies, and the manner in which he had educated himself, for one saw that nothing remained in him of his theological training, or of the influence of the Sorbonne. I learned that, at Chartres, where he spent the greater part of the summer, he lived almost as a recluse, not liking the provincial society, and putting himself out for nobody. He read little, and thought a great deal; the works he liked best were Rousseau's "Contrat Social," and Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations." He had written much, but could not bear the trouble of revising what he wrote; he did not think he had the art of composition, and in this respect, he envied the facility and energy of Mirabeau, and would have liked to find some one capable of correcting his manuscripts and giving them the final revising of which he was incapable.

He did not care much for the society of women, but was

passionately fond of music, of which he had a thorough knowledge, and in which he could perform with success. At this epoch, he was the real leader of the third estate, though he was less in evidence than anyone else.

Full of ardour and activity for his party, he made other people work more than he worked himself, he laid the plans for the battle, though, on the day itself, he remained in his tent. Girardin said of him, that he was to his party what the mole is to the turf, that he burrows and upheaves it.

The Bishop of Chartres was one of the bishops attached to the popular party, that is to say, he was for the union of the Orders, manhood suffrage and a new constitution; he was not a politician, nor had he a great intellect, but he had such good faith and candour, that nothing dismayed him, he never imagined that the third estate could have other ideas than to reform abuses and to act justly. A stranger to all intrigues, with sincere intentions, he followed only the dictates of his conscience, and was animated by the purest sentiments of duty. His religion resembled his politics, he was firm in his faith, but tolerant, and rejoiced to see protestants freed from all restrictions. He expected the clergy to be obliged to make great sacrifices, but not to be the victims of the Revolution. I saw him at the time that the property of the Church was declared to belong to the Nation; and I found him one day, with tears in his eyes, sending away his old servants, reducing his hospitable house and selling some of his valuable goods, in order to pay his debts. He told me his sorrows with entire confidence, his

regrets were not for himself, but he accused himself of having been deceived and of having taken the side of the third estate, who, when they became powerful, renounced the engagements they had undertaken in their weakness. How sad it was, that a good man should have contributed so much to the success of such an unjust party! But no man had ever less cause to reproach himself. I must not omit two anecdotes about him, which I cannot remember without emotion. In the days of the first disturbances, he was sent by the Assembly to a village near Versailles, to rescue an unfortunate baker, named Thomassin, with whom the people were furious. He had in vain employed every argument in his favour, but he saw these savages seize the unfortunate man, in order to tear him to pieces; there was only a minute to save him; the worthy Bishop threw himself on his knees in the thick mud, and implored them to put him to death rather than allow him to be the witness of such a monstrous crime; and the crowd of frenzied men and women, astonished at this noble humility, retired in a respectful way and allowed him time to get poor Thomassin into his carriage, but he was already half dead, and covered with blood and dirt.

The other anecdote is not to be compared to this one, but it shows his delicate sense of honour. At the time when the supposed national reforms were already causing much misery, he bought a gold box, which had been offered him for a very small sum. On bringing it home, he found that the box was worth much more than he had given for it. Anxious about his acquisition, and fearing that he had profited by the want

of the seller, he had no peace till he found him, in order to give him some more money, though he would much rather have returned the box itself, which, at the price it was worth, was more than he could afford. "But," he said, "if I give it back, perhaps he may be forced by poverty to sell it still more badly; it is a small sacrifice, and probably the last one I shall be in a position to make."

After the emigration, this excellent man was concealed in some village in Germany, and the Marquis of Lansdowne, who had known him at Spa, sent him, in a round-about way, a note for a hundred louis. He would not receive it, declaring that if he could not discharge the debt, he must know the name of his benefactor, and not be prevented from showing his gratitude. I had the satisfaction of being Lord Lansdowne's interpreter, and of showing him in his misfortune the respect in which he was held by those who had known him in his prosperity.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROYAL SESSION

MORE than a month had passed in this state of waiting when Sieyes thought it was time to issue a positive summons to the two orders, and on their refusal to attend, he proceeded to verify the writs of returns to make the Commons begin work. The time, though apparently lost, had been put to very good profit by the members of the third estate. They had gained in public favour: the two other orders were divided. The minority of the clergy were very nearly in favour of equality. The masses, who only looked on the surface of any question, considered the nobility and clergy obstinate people who would never agree to anything because they refused to meet in the same chamber as the members of the third estate. The people of Versailles got into the way of insulting those whom they termed aristocrats, both in the streets and at the doors of the Assembly. The power of this word became magical, as do all party names. What astonishes me is that there was no contrary word to denote those of the opposing party—that which was called the "Nation." One can imagine the effect of these two terms opposed to each other. The people of

Paris, so easy to govern, and so weak when they were in a quiet condition, gradually became beside themselves and as blown out with imflammable gas as a balloon.

Though the Commons were already aware of their strength, opinion was divided among them as to the best means of using their power, and also as to what name to give the Assembly. They had not yet the audacity they showed later on. Men who were farseeing judged that this decision would have the greatest consequences. To declare themselves the "National Assembly" was to count the King, the Nobility, and the Clergy for nothing. It would be the beginning of a civil war if the Government had enough energy for this. To call themselves simply the "Assembly of the Commons" was to state an indubitable fact, but it did not force the Nobility and Clergy to join them: it allowed the division of chambers to continue. Several other names were suggested which did not clearly express either of these two views, as everyone was anxious to conceal their real opinions, and even Sieyes, who rejected anything that was in favour of preserving the three orders, did not dare all at once declare the decisive title of "National Assembly." He proposed an ambiguous phrase which suggested this idea but did not clearly express it. It was only at the end of a two or three days' debate that he took the plunge and employed a member called Le Grand to put the motion. This appeal to the vote, which lasted well into the night, had about it something sinister and alarming. With much difficulty absolute silence had been imposed on the galleries.

It was a test for both sides. There were eighty votes to reject the name of "National Assembly" and nearly five hundred to adopt it. I have reserved for a separate article the part that Mirabeau played in this important discussion. This essential point had been thoroughly discussed in our little society. The danger of a rupture with the court and nobility, the harm of opening the States General with a quarrel between the orders, the necessary recourse to disastrous methods to carry out this first step and to overcome resistance;—all these considerations were duly considered; but that which had still more influence on us was, that we had in our minds as a model, the English Constitution, and that the division of the legislative body into two divisions appeared to us far preferable to a single assembly with no curb or restraining influence. This course once adopted, it was not easy to persuade Mirabeau to support it. It was going against the tide of popular opinion: it required courage to put himself into declared opposition to Sieyes, against the Bretons and against the Palais Royal, and to expose himself to all the calumnies, all the clamour, and all the suspicions which his apparent deviation from democratic principles would produce. But Mirabeau possessed in a great degree the courage suitable to the occasion. He had no dislike for a vigorous opposition, he did not care about Sieyes or the Bretons, who did not flatter him: in short he relied on his own powers of eventually regaining popularity if this motion made him lose it. He temporised with the dominant party in a very equivocal speech, in which he

treated the privileged orders with contempt, but he concluded by proposing that the Commons should organise themselves under the title of "*Députés du peuple Français.*"

This motion was at first neither well understood nor violently objected to, but when they saw that Mallouet, who passed for a ministerialist, took that side, and that he was carrying the moderate party with him, the popular party were alarmed and began a violent attack on Mirabeau. The word "people," which appeared at first to be synonymous with the word "nation," was represented from another point of view as if it were opposed to the nobility and clergy, who were not the people, and who pretended to be superior to them. Insults were freely exchanged. The author of the motion was looked on as an aristocrat in disguise, who wished to degrade the French nation by applying to it this name. The storm increased by degrees and seemed to foretell a fatal outburst. I was sitting at the time in one of the galleries talking to a young Scotsman, Lord Elgin, who was much pleased with Mirabeau's motion. Indignant at all the foolish ideas that arose from the use of the word "people," I could not resist the pleasure of writing down what I would have said had I been a member of the Assembly. After some reasonings on the grounds of the question, I wrote in pencil a sort of apostrophe or peroration addressed to all the pretended friends of Liberty who thought themselves degraded by being the "Members of the People." This manuscript, rapidly scribbled, was not wanting in spirit and go. Lord Elgin begged me to let him read it and, as I had no

ulterior object, I gave him the paper, with which he seemed very much pleased. The dinner hour now interrupted the sitting; I was dining with Mirabeau and Duroverai, and the latter reproached him with the weakness of his speech, and showed him that he had forgotten his strongest and most convincing arguments. I showed him my rough sketch, and the peroration seemed so triumphant to him that he determined in an instant to hurl this scorching thunderbolt at their heads.

"That is not possible," I replied, "for I have already shown it to Lord Elgin who was by my side in the gallery."

"Oh! it does not matter to me if you have shown it to the whole world. I will quote it as the most apt passage written on the situation."

Duroverai, who had the success of the motion greatly at heart, wrote straight off a refutation of all others. Mirabeau copied it as quickly as he could, and the result was a tolerably completed speech, for which he only required to gain a hearing. He had difficulty in obtaining this, but the galleries took so much pleasure in listening to him, that the Assembly did not dare to interrupt. The exordium that I wrote attracted a good deal of attention. The arguments of the speech were passed by between mingled applause and murmurs, but this peroration, which he pronounced in a voice of thunder, and to which he compelled attention by a kind of terror, made a great sensation. There were not cries, but convulsions of rage. The agitation was general.

A storm of insults burst from all quarters on the orator, who remained quietly standing immovable, while the poor author of this unfortunate effort, petrified in a corner, was groaning at the failure, so disastrous both to his friend and to the cause. This is the peroration:

"I persevere in my motion and in the only expression which has been attacked—I mean in the designation of the 'French People.' I adopt it, I defend it, I proclaim it aloud for the very reason that makes it opposed. Yes, it is because the name of the people is not sufficiently respected in France, because it is befogged, covered with the rust of prejudice, because it suggests an idea to us, at which pride is alarmed and vanity revolts, because it is pronounced with contempt in the aristocratic chamber—for these reasons, Gentlemen, I should like to impose on ourselves the task not only of elevating it, but of ennobling it, and to make it for the future respected by the ministry and beloved by all. If this name were not our own, it would be the one we should choose before all others, we should look upon it as the most precious means of serving the People, who exist, who are all important, whom we represent, whose rights we defend, from whom we have received our own, and whose name we now appear to blush to borrow to designate our denominations and our titles.—Ah! if the choice of this name would only restore to the down-trodden people their firmness and courage! My soul rises in the contemplation of the happy consequences that may in the future follow this name. The people would only look to us, and we should

look to the people. Our title will serve to recall to us our duties and our strength. Under the shadow of a name which neither causes fright nor apprehension, we plant a germ, we disperse the dark shadows which would overpower it. We will protect it. Future generations will sit under the beneficent shadow of its spreading branches.

"Representatives of the people, can you answer me? Will you go and tell your constituents that you have rejected the name of People, that even if you have not been ashamed of it, you have nevertheless tried to elude the designation which did not appear brilliant enough for you, that you require a more pompous title than the one that has been conferred on you? Oh! do you not see that the name of the People is a necessary one for you, because it makes them recognize the fact that their interests are bound up with yours, because it will teach them to let all their thoughts and hopes centre in you. The heroes of the Low Countries, when they laid the foundations of their national liberties, were more clever than we. They took the name of "Gueux," and would have no other title than this, because their tyrants had imagined that the name would be a source of contempt, and this title, by attaching to them an immense class which was despised by the aristocratic despotism, was at once their glory, their strength, and the pledge of their success. The friends of liberty choose the name which is most useful to them, and not the one which flatters them most. They deck themselves out in the insults of their enemies, and by doing this they take away the power of

being humiliated by expressions which they are able to convert into titles of honour."

After the tumult had a little subsided, Mirabeau resumed his speech and said in a grave, solemn voice:

"M. le President, I leave on your desk the writing which has excited so much discontent, and which has been so misunderstood. I wish it to be judged on its merits by all true friends of liberty."

After these words he left the Assembly in the midst of furious imprecations and menaces.

I went to see him an hour afterwards, feeling dismayed and broken-down, but I found him triumphantly reading his speech to some people from Marseilles who were bursting with admiration. It must be allowed that he returned with full interest all the insults he received in the Assembly. It was then for the first time that he compared them to wild asses whose only gift from nature is their faculty for biting and rearing.

"They don't frighten me, my dear friend," he said to me prophetically. "In a week you will see I shall be stronger than ever. They will be obliged to come to me when they are on the point of being overwhelmed by the tempest they have just let loose. Do not regret the events of this evening. Thoughtful people will see in my motion a serious object, and as for those fools whom I despise too much to be able to hate, I shall save them in spite of themselves."

With all this exaltation of pride and momentary courage, he had not sufficient strength of mind to vote for the ques-

tion, and therefore his name is not on the list of eighty members who were pointed out to the people as traitors sold to the aristocracy. His popularity did not suffer at the Palais Royal, whereas Mallouet, Mounier, and several others who had held the same opinion with less brilliancy, were pilloried by the popular orators. The day after this famous sitting, when Sieyes appeared in the chamber, all the Assembly were seized with a sudden movement of respect, and rose spontaneously to receive him. Applause resounded on all sides.

"What a pity," said Mirabeau to me, "that they imagine that everything is settled; but I should not be surprised if civil war were the result of their wonderful decree."

The nobility were struck dumb by the audacity of the third estate. Those who surrounded the King kept assuring him that all would be lost if he did not pronounce against this usurpation of rights by the Commons. The sittings in the Upper Chamber were scenes of fury. The decree of the third estate was only spoken of as a revolt, a treason, a conspiracy.

The alienation was complete. The King was implored to request all his faithful subjects to rally to his defence, to put himself at the head of his troops, to have the traitors arrested and to disperse the Assembly. It was to this state of affairs and to the violence of these proposals that one must attribute most of the events that followed. It is necessary to have been a witness of all this ferment to understand the course of affairs. Historical facts, when denuded of their preceding

circumstances, are not to be easily explained. The Versailles atmosphere was at the same time gloomy and smouldering. The explosion which was preparing could not fail to be a terrible one.

It was then that Duroverai conceived a plan which he confided to M. Mallouet, but which he would not communicate to Mirabeau because he feared his wild impetuosity and because he was not in the confidence of any party. The plan was that of a Royal session of the Assembly where the King was to pose as the provisional legislator of France, was to annul the decree of the Commons which declared them "the National Assembly, but at the same time was to command the nobility and clergy to unite themselves to the Third Estate in order to verify their rights together.

The object of this session, therefore, was to assert by royal authority what the Commons had already achieved without it, and to order the reunion of the nobility and clergy so that this reunion should be the accomplished work of the King and not of the Third Estate. It was really only in order to save appearances, as the result would be the same, but in this way the nobles would not present such a humiliating attitude, and all the friction and squabbles between the three parties would be ended without their being followed by either the victory of the Third Estate by its popular movement, or by the dissolution of the Assembly, which would be the certain forerunner of a civil war.

Mallouet agreed entirely with Duroverai's views, and

carried M. Necker with them, but there were no direct communications between them.

The plan of the royal session was adopted by the King, but when M. Necker's speeches were heard, a different construction was placed on them to what he had intended. There was a tussle between two sides in the council, the Comte d'Artois gained the day.

They resolved to annul the decree of the Commons, but not to insist on the re-union of the orders, so that the essence of M. Necker's measure was changed, and only the form remained. He wished to put democracy into a royal setting, and instead of this they placed the aristocracy into a setting of despotism. Authority was all right when it was used to ennoble a necessary act of condescension, but became revolting when it enforced an act of vigour which the King could not sustain unaided. If one considers this Royal sitting by itself, it appears to contain the greatest concessions ever made by a monarch to his people, and at any other time it would have produced the most lively gratitude. If a prince is powerful all that he grants is regarded as a gift, and all that he renounces is a gracious favour; but if he is weak all that he grants is only a repaid debt, and everything he refuses is an injustice.

The Commons wished to be the National Assembly, and nothing less than that would content them. The Royalists ought to have counted their strength before opposing them, but to hold a court of justice, to annul decrees, to make a great affair of it, and not to have foreseen any resistance,

not to have taken a single act of precaution for the consequences, or arranged for any support in the Assembly was a real act of madness, and from this time dates the ruin of the monarchy.

There is nothing more dangerous than to force a weak king into strong measures, for when he has exhausted the magical power that pertains to his splendour, no other resource remains, the authority of the throne is degraded, and the people discover the secret of the impotence of the prince!

The procedure of the royal session was as badly arranged as if it had to do with undisciplined schoolboys. The chamber of the States General was closed for three or four days. A military display of soldiery gave an air of violence to the preparations. The members turned out of their chamber at the point of the bayonet, took refuge in the famous Tennis Court, where they took the oath never to separate till the constitution was established. Even the minority of the Third Estate, the eighty who had rejected the decree, took this oath as well as the others; for not having been warned of anything they thought that the King wished to dissolve the States General, and Mirabeau, also deceived, pronounced strongly against the approaching dissolution, so much so that his greatest enemies began to turn their eyes towards him, as to an athlete whom it would be needful to employ in the actual crisis.

It is necessary to have been a witness of this scene, where fear hid itself under an appearance of courage, where the

most timid were the loudest in crying out, in order to understand all the harm produced by it in the Revolution. Men of sense were alienated and frightened, the oath became a bond of honour between them, and the members of the Third Estate were from this moment confederated together against the royal authority. An appearance of persecution redoubled the interest in the Commons. Paris was moved by their danger, the Palais Royale became frantic. Ominous rumours threatened the most distinguished people. In a troubled horizon things no longer appeared in their true light. The people, now thoroughly alarmed, became suspicious and wavering, and everything that the Court subsequently did to reassure them had no effect in restoring their confidence. This was the real origin of the burning excitement which was carefully nurtured by two different types of men, the factious and the timid.

The day following the sitting in the Tennis Court, the members, still excluded from their chamber where the necessary preparations were being made for the great day, presented themselves in one or two of the churches, where they were refused admittance, the representatives of the nation looking for a shelter and finding none, were a sight to inflame imaginations. At last they entered the church of Saint-Louis, and there some of the clergy, led by the Archbishops of Vienne, of Bordeaux, and by the Bishop of Chartres, came to join with the members of the Third Estate. The applause, the embracings, the pathetic speeches, the tears, all showed that these men were joining together

against a common peril. The devotion of the clergy was all the more meritorious in that it was voluntary.

Who could have foreseen, at this time, that very shortly afterwards an ecclesiastic could not show himself in public without being exposed to every sort of insult.

The day of the Royal session, I was in the palace to see the magnificent procession pass by. I remember the hostile and triumphant looks of several people who were in the castle. Victory was, they thought, already assured them. I saw the King's ministers issue forth; they wished to appear calm, but their emotions broke out in spite of themselves; the Comte D'Artois's bearing was full of pride, the King appeared sad and mournful, there was a great crowd and a profound silence. When the King entered his carriage the drums beat, and there were fanfares of different instruments, but not a cheer from the people, not a single "Vive le Roi." Fear alone restrained them from breaking forth in murmurings. At last the long cortège began to move, all the royal family, the guards, the officers, the cavalry, wended their way to the chamber of the States General, where the three orders, re-united, sat looking at each other with defiant and dumb indignation, and were impatiently awaiting the result of this great day. There never were so many violent opposing passions imprisoned in the same building. The procedure was precisely the same as at the opening of the States General, but what a difference in feeling! The first day then had been a national holiday, the birth-day of Liberty, but to-day the same pomp which had delighted

all eyes, was now hidden by terror. The nobility's brilliant costumes, the magnificence of the throne, and all this display of royal pomp, seemed only the accompaniments of a funeral ceremony.

I only know what passed at this sitting by hearsay; the Commons disguised their feelings of consternation when the King, the nobility, and the clergy had retired. Then they understood the importance of the decree which they had passed so lightly. They saw themselves placed in the necessity of either subduing Royalty itself, or of retracting their decree. Nobody had yet broken the silence when a message came from the King calling upon them to retire. This message, brought by a very young man, a master of the ceremonies, had nothing authoritative about it. It was then that Mirabeau pronounced the words which made an epoch in the Revolution, and which re-animated the down-trodden spirit of the Assembly. "Go tell your master," he said, "that we are here by the will of the people, and that we shall only leave at the point of the bayonet."

The debate now took a more decided character. The Royal session was considered in the light of a court of justice. It brought to remembrance how the "Parlements" had behaved on similar occasions, and how many times they had dared to annul orders that had been given by the King in person, and how often the court had been vanquished by their perseverance.

Before separating, the members had already confirmed both their decree and the Tennis Court oath. The King had

hardly returned to the Palace before the Royal session had been annulled.

One circumstance that encouraged the resistance of the members was, that M. Necker had not accompanied the King to the sitting. He was the only one of the ministers who had not done so, and his absence marked his disapproval of the proceedings. His popularity became immense, it was felt that he could be trusted, as a steady anchor in a storm.

The Assembly, which afterwards became jealous of the affection which the people had for him, because it wanted to be everything and to absorb everything itself, felt at that time that it was in its own interest to make him into a public idol, and to use his name as a counterbalance to the influence of the Court. But his absence was really due to a small cause. A certain M. de Riol, so-called "Chevalier" owing to his possessing some Swedish order, a very insignificant personage, who was always thrusting himself into everything, and who was intimate with M. Necker, and had made our acquaintance, came to see us the same day, and assured us that he had found M. Necker ready to go to M. de Montmorin's in order to accompany the King to the Assembly, that on that, Riol had implored him to do nothing of the kind, and represented to him that if he did so he would share all the unpopularity of the measure, and would no longer be able to do any good, and was so carried away by his zeal, that he told him that he would rather be the cause of his breaking an arm or a leg, than allow him to go to it.

Madame Necker, much moved, joined her entreaty to his, and at last M. Necker gave way.

I have no reason either to doubt the truth of this story, or to affirm it, but if it is true, M. Necker allowed himself to be persuaded in a very important affair by a very trivial personage; all the same it is often the case that a man with little intelligence will communicate his fears in a most persuasive manner, and that excited gestures have sometimes more effect than reason or eloquence.

But was M. Necker to blame for not giving the weight of his presence to a project in which his speeches had been insidiously made use of, and the essential part of his measures changed?

Mirabeau was informed by Clavière (who could never keep a secret), of the real origin of the Royal session. He spoke to me about it in a fit of fury: "Duroverai," he said, "did not think I was worth consulting; I know well that he looks on me as a fool with occasional lucid intervals; but I could have told him beforehand the trick that would be played with his measure. It is not with the unstable character of the French that you ought to play in this brutal manner. And to confide such methods of action to a man like M. Necker! Why, you might as well apply a cautery to a wooden leg, as to give him advice which he is not in a position to follow. And getting more excited about the danger of this sitting, he added with emphasis, "This is the path that leads Kings to the scaffold."

CHAPTER V.

THE ADDRESS TO THE KING

IT was at this juncture that the people began to get excited. I do not doubt that there were committees for organizing insurrections, meetings of paid orators, and money distributed, and that this organization had its chief agents in Versailles, and probably belonged to the minority of the Nobles rather than to the Third Estate. I will only relate the particulars that are known to myself.

I firmly believe that at this time, the members of the Third Estate did not act in concert; it was only amongst the Bretons that there was any beginning of organization; they were already accustomed to similar tactics in their provincial disputes. As far as I know, the Breton Club, which by its co-operation had become very important, was managed by the minority of the Nobles; there will never be a complete history of the Revolution until some one on that side has given us a faithful memoir of the time.

I recall one anecdote: I met Sieyes, who did not name anyone, but he was coming from a Breton meeting, and said to me: "I will no longer work with those men, their

politics are underhand, they propose to commit outrages, and consider them to be a proper means of action."

Duport and the Lameths have the reputation of being the chief movers in the Revolution of Paris. The Duc d'Orleans could easily have made his influence felt on the centre movement. He sat at the Palais Royal like a spider in the middle of its web.

But I knew nothing of all this, except as one of the public.

Mirabeau was not intimate with these people. His fiery and intractable character did not make him a good colleague. His mind lacked ballast, he did not inspire enough confidence to be a leader, and had too much pride and strength to play a second part. He therefore remained independent, envious to a degree of anyone's growing reputation in the Assembly, dealing out epigrams of abuse wholesale, but descending to individual flatteries. He cut himself off from his friends by his contempt for some of them, and his jealousy of others. I often went to Paris with him, and I am convinced that he had not at this time the smallest part in the movement in the capital.

Those who wish to ascribe the Revolution to the plotters of secret machinations fall into a great mistake. They did not create the general disposition of things, they only made use of them, increased and directed them, but it is ridiculous to ascribe to individual conspirators the vast and sudden impulse which possessed the French people at the time of which I speak. Everything was shaken to its foundations

in Paris. The coolest heads were carried away in the passion of the moment. It was a general overheating of the whole mass. A cry from the Palais Royale, a chance movement, a trifle, would cause a general commotion. In this state of affairs, tumults produce tumults, the maladies of the preceding day only increase those of the morrow.

Many details of this time have escaped my memory, but I remember the interval between the Royal sitting and the sad apparition of the King in the Assembly, when he came to give himself up, and, as one may say, to depose himself, after the taking of the Bastille; as I said before, I remember this interval as a time of trouble and gloom; false alarms were being continually raised, things were asserted and then at once contradicted, orders given and then retracted; everything was explained away, everything guessed at, motives suspected for the most trivial matters: the Palace was watched; every movement was spied out, everything caused scenes of excitement. There were insurrections in Versailles which proceeded, not from any fixed plan, but from a suspicious and irascible state of mind. Notwithstanding this, the three Orders remained divided against each other in a menacing attitude. The Court kept the troops active; Versailles was full of foreign soldiers, and everywhere there was a display of military. There was an undercurrent of talk concerning a change in the Ministry, and the names of the designated did not please the Commons. So much activity on the part of the Court could have but one object, to make itself strong enough to enforce

the decrees of the Royal sitting, either by ordering the removal of the Assembly from Paris, which was too dangerous a neighbourhood, or by pronouncing its dissolution, if this could be done without causing a civil war. The mere idea of this made the King tremble. But whatever were the intentions of the Court, or of those who guided the Court affairs, which were sometimes not in accordance with those of the King, there was an alarming secrecy about all their conduct, one saw preparations being made and a plan gradually being developed, though one never knew the result. This distrust disturbed everyone, and the ferment in Paris was at its height.

Reybaz and Clavière came from Paris and assured us that the people would soon be beyond control. They induced Mirabeau to give his opinion on this occasion: "If," they said, "the Assembly is mistaken in assuming the title of 'The National Assembly,' it is an error that they cannot rectify without degrading the representation of the people, and giving a complete triumph to the insolence of the aristocracy. If the States General are dissolved, bankruptcy is inevitable, the people will be glad of it, the Government will lessen the taxes, there will be no more obstruction, and the cause of liberty will be lost." I am certain that at this time all the State bondholders, a body of men who were very numerous, active and powerful in Paris, were all in direct opposition to the Court, because they saw very well that it was only necessary to declare the State bankrupt, in order to pull themselves out of the deficit,

declare a surplus, and not to hear anything more about States Generals, Constitutions, or the Sovereignty of the People.

At last it became known that the Court was testing the regiments that were arriving at Versailles, as well as the French Guards, to discover to what point they were to be trusted, and how far their devotion and service could be depended on. There was no time to lose, and it was thought that the King himself ought to be warned of the manœuvres, the aim and object of which could no longer be hidden from him. It was all these considerations that produced Mirabeau's famous speech on the dismissal of the troops; this speech was a sort of résumé of all that had passed in our conversations: I composed it, Duroverai drew up the resolutions in it which contained the proposed measures. Amongst these, one consisted in demanding from the King the establishment of a bourgeois militia. This was the only one rejected by the Assembly, and it was perhaps the most important of them all. Duroverai foresaw that, if the people took up arms, the royal authority would be lost, but that, if the King presided at this new institution, he might make such a choice of men and officers that, like the English militia, it would be a safeguard against insurrections, without endangering the cause of liberty. The last of the resolutions was that an address should be presented to the King, relating to the dismissal of the troops. A committee was appointed to draw up this address, for the Assembly referred everything to committees, in order to give as little

responsibility or importance possible to individuals, but like all other matters of business, the one of composing and writing is not an easy one to do in concert. Mirabeau was therefore offered by the committee the task of drawing up the rough draft of this address. Excited by the success of the speech, full of the subject, and also, it must be confessed, encouraged by all Mirabeau's flatteries and affection, I wrote at length and with great facility the address to the King.[1] I recall one circumstance which amused me very much at the moment; Garat, who was one of the committee that had been given the task of drawing up the address, came to Mirabeau to know at what o'clock he ought to attend; Mirabeau knew nothing about it, as I was still in the throes of composition. He prevaricated in his answers, and put aside the question. Next day, dining with M. de la Rochefoucauld, another member of the committee, whose name I have forgotten, held forth in ecstasy on the excellency of this address and on Mirabeau's modesty in having consented to all the changes asked for, as if his pride in this work was of no consequence. I do not know if I was more sensitive, but I did not think the changes had at all improved the work. I was flattered by the praise given to this address, but I was not foolish enough to think it was a masterpiece! I knew very well that its chief merit was in the circumstance of its appropriateness. There is a high tone in it and a simple style, as much oratory as could be admitted consistently with the respect due to the Monarch and the dignity of the Assembly,

[1] See Appendix.

for whom it was the mouthpiece. It was essentially moderate, but was combined with a sort of "unction," and the proprieties were well observed. This met with Mirabeau's approbation, all the more so, as he knew he had no facility for this sort of writing. "My style," he said, "is naturally a violent one, and I can express myself forcibly without any difficulty; but if I wish to be gentle, suave and moderate, I become insipid, and my flabby style makes me sick."

I could afterwards have discovered faults in this address, but it would not have done to mention them to Mirabeau. His pride was extended to all the children of his adoption, and he had quite a parental affection for them! Whilst I worked for Mirabeau, it appeared to me that I had the same pleasure that some man of humble position might have who exchanged his children at nurse, and introduced them into some great family, when he would be obliged to look up to them with respect in spite of being their father. This was my case; once Mirabeau had adopted them, he would have defended them even against me, indeed he would even have allowed me to admire them, as a trait of esteem and friendship for himself.

All the same, if the credit due to these writings belonged to another, it did not prevent the ignored author having his moments of enjoyment concerning them.

I was not long in discovering that Mirabeau's intimate friends looked upon Duroverai and me as his wirepullers; his disordered life, his continual gaddings, his occupations at the Assembly, his committees, his wasted time, his taste for

pleasure, all these things prevented those who knew him well from thinking it possible that he could be the author of the writings that appeared in his name.

The answer of the King to this address was not satisfactory. No one doubted his own intentions being good, but he was supposed to be led away and deceived. There was a plan being developed, a plan of which no one knew either the scope or the object. There was talk of the threats of subordinates, of insults, everything seeming to be the precursor of a *coup d'Etat*, troops were moving, the heads of the Corps de Garde were paying nocturnal visits, there were secret councils at the Court, to which M. Necker was not summoned, and a multitude of trifles of the same kind made up the daily events, which were all misrepresented and exaggerated still further by uneasiness and alarm. No one was yet bold enough to speak of the "Court Conspiracy," which expression was only used after the Court influence had been suppressed, but there was general alarm. The march of the troops on Paris and the dismissal of M. Necker brought about the insurrection of the capital. I will not say anything about the public events of which I was not an eye-witness. I stayed on at Versailles, and was constantly in the National Assembly, whose conduct during the danger was unshaken. There were no longer any parties. The union of all was complete. The dissolution of the States General seemed to all of them the signal of the greatest misfortunes.

The sitting of the 13th July was most alarmingly calm. What had passed in Paris on Sunday was concealed under

a thousand confused reports; it was known that the mob had repulsed the regiment of the Prince de Lambesc as far as the Tuileries, that the Gardes-Françaises had adopted the side of the people, that shots had been exchanged between them and the Swiss Guard, that the people were arming, the gunsmiths' shops being plundered, the barriers were closed—in one word, Paris was in open insurrection. Mirabeau told us that there was a list of those about to be banished, that Sieyes, Chapelier, Lafayette, Lameth and many others were to be arrested, that they had been warned of it, and that they were passing the night in the Assembly, where they thought themselves safer than in their own homes. As a matter of fact, the sitting was not brought to a close, and in the intervals between the deputations which were being sent to the King to implore him to withdraw the troops, whose presence was exciting the capital, they discussed a declaration on the Rights of Man, according to a plan suggested by Lafayette. The King, in his answer, told the deputations that he was broken-hearted, that it was impossible that the orders which he had given for the re-establishment of public order could have caused the disturbance in Paris, but he said nothing about dismissing the troops; the men by whom he was surrounded were not of a kind to restore confidence: the plot appeared to be progressing towards completion, when the Assembly made a last effort and sent him, on Tuesday morning, a new and more influential deputation. Mirabeau, in a voice made hoarse by the fatigue and anxiety of the long

sitting, pronounced a few words, which were warmly received.

It was a fact that the Versailles troops had renounced their obedience, and that, after the taking of the Bastille and the extraordinary metamorphosis which in two days changed the peaceful citizens of Paris into an army of two hundred thousand men, there remained no choice to the King but to throw in his lot with the National Assembly and to seek his own safety in their midst. What a contrast to the sitting of the 21st June! The King suddenly announced his intention of going to Paris; Mirabeau, astonished at this resolution, and still more so at its fulfilment, said afterwards to me: "Whoever has advised this step is a bold man, without it he would have lost Paris, two or three days later he would perhaps not have been in a position to return." I attribute these words to Mirabeau's singular sagacity; he knew the determination of the Duke of Orleans, and thought that he might have profited by circumstances in order to seize the capital. But if the Duke of Orleans's party was capable of forming this plan, it was disconcerted by the sudden visit of the King, which rekindled all the affection of the Parisians for him. It seemed that these two hundred thousand men had passed the word to each other to receive him with the most awe-inspiring solemnity; during the progress to the Hôtel de Ville, the only cheers heard were: "Vive l'Assemblée Nationale," but on the return journey, as if to show the King that his lesson was over, cries of "Vive le Roi" were heard on all sides.

The King was a weak character but not a timid one, as was proved on this day. It needed great courage to expose himself to the danger and even the humiliation of appearing in the midst of an excited populace, who appeared to be conferring a favour on their King by receiving him within the walls of his own capital. At the moment when M. Bailli told him that Henry IV. had vanquished his people, but that now the people had vanquished their King, he turned to the Prince de Beauveau and said to him in a low voice: "I don't know if I ought to listen to that." The Prince made him a sign, and the orator continued.

The death of the Marquis de Mirabeau, the author of "l'Ami des Hommes," necessitated Mirabeau's absence from the Assembly for two or three days. It was at the moment when motions were carried for the return of M. Necker and against the new ministers' appointments.

Mirabeau, distracted by both his private and public affairs, had made me promise to write him an account of the Revolution. I was busy doing this in Paris, but I had great difficulty in collecting all the facts, in discarding and minimizing exaggerations, and in discovering the truth amidst so many falsehoods. The causes of events were hidden, the secret councils of the Court were unknown. It seemed important to me to distinguish between the King and his ministers, and to represent him as having agreed to a plan, of which one part only had been shown him while the other was hidden; in Paris itself, the more important the occasion, the more confused were the details. Some

described the taking of the Bastille as a wonderful event, others reduced it to nothing. I did not know what to believe about Launay and the invalids. These crimes appeared to me the result of sudden passion, but at the time no one doubted that there had been a perfidious betrayal. At last, convinced that it was impossible to know the real history of such an important event at the moment at which it occurred, I did my best to compose a narrative of it which appeared in Mirabeau's nineteenth letter to his constituents. In this he made some changes, and caused the disappearance of some doubtful features, because the complicity of the Court was more apparent to him than to me. This letter had a prodigious success, and was the cause of both of us becoming very popular.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COURRIER DE PROVENCE [1]

MIRABEAU'S letters to his constituents, with the exception of the first one, had all been drawn up by Duroverai or myself. Mirabeau, who was very anxious to make us settle in Paris during the sitting of the National Assembly, proposed that we should join a society that promised to be very lucrative; it was to produce a newspaper, with his name as editor, of which the profits were to be divided between four people—le Jay, his librarian, himself, Duroverai, and me. The publication was to be called the "Courrier de Provence." It was announced in the nineteenth letter, and subscribers came in such crowds,

[1] The "Courrier de Provence" is become very fashionable in London, and though the booksellers here make a profit of cent. per cent. (for they charge half a guinea for a month's subscription), yet I saw the other day at De Boffe's shop a list of forty-five subscribers to it. Among them were some persons of the first rank: the Duke of Portland, Lord Loughborough, Mr. Grenville, the Secretary of State, Lord Mountstuart, and many others whose names I do not recollect. Elmsly has it too, and is a more fashionable bookseller than De Boffe. From all this I conclude that there will soon be a long list of subscribers in London alone."—SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY, *letter to Dumont, Nov.*, 1789.

though the price was very high, that we already imagined ourselves rolling in wealth. In a few days our list already numbered three thousand people. The provincial demands were in the same proportion. If le Jay had been a man of business, and if his wife, who managed everything, had had a little more method and honesty, their fortune would have been made; but their misconduct and rapacity ruined this undertaking. We were occupied with our business in Versailles and were obliged to leave everything to them. There were continual complaints from the subscribers; the provincial ones were completely neglected, they were sometimes a fortnight or a month without receiving their numbers, as le Jay had no money to pay the postage or carriage of them.

The publications were stopped, the libraries applied in vain for them, the Paris printer, when he could not get his money, stopped work, and the enterprise had to wait till Mirabeau made the necessary advances. At the end of four months, when we wished to look over the accounts, we found that there were none, Madame le Jay had hidden the books, she had furnished her house with the profits, had stocked her shop, which from having been a wretched little newspaper depôt had become a regular library; everything pointed to her having attained an opulent position, but she had absorbed the whole of the profits of the undertaking and refused to disgorge what was due to us.

I left the task of unravelling all these worries to Duroverai. Quarrelling was not my strong point; business matters did

not interest me, and I did not understand them. Mirabeau was placed between two batteries; he was irritated by Madame le Jay's dishonesty, and one day said to her in my presence, "Madame le Jay, if honesty did not exist it would be necessary to invent it in order to attain riches." But Madame le Jay had different ideas of morality, and Mirabeau's connection with this clever and capable woman prevented his taking a high line with her. She was in possession of all his secrets, she knew too many anecdotes about him, and was too dangerous and wicked for him to dare to quarrel with her, though he was completely tired of her, and in the distinguished circles in which he now moved he felt that this connection was a degradation for him.

This is the only occasion in my life that I became mixed up in money disputes, and in which I was in close touch with fraudulent intrigues and covetous passions. Le Jay was an idiot who made many promises but trembled like a child before his wife. Mirabeau, ashamed of having failed us, swore that the National Assembly was more easy to lead than a woman who had made up her mind. "The whole legal profession would fail to convict her," he said; "I would defy the cleverest lawyer to unmask the deceptions that she invents." As it was impossible to prosecute her, we settled to give up publishing the newspaper. For a moment she was disconcerted and thought she might gain me over to her side, and tried to do so in a very artful conversation. Without losing my temper, or even entering into the quarrel, I declared that my mind was made up,

and that I should not separate myself from Duroverai. "Very well," she said, "you have brought it on yourself; I am sorry for it, but we live in a civilized town and there are other authors besides you. I have already received proposals from them." She therefore visited all the writers she knew, and proposed to them to contribute to what she considered was her newspaper, for she looked upon it as her own property as much as if it were a landed estate and we her labourers. After several useless attempts, she at last found two people who undertook the business; one of them was M. Guiraudez, a man of talent and many acquaintances, whom I had met in Mirabeau's society. This uncivil proceeding astonished me very much, but we were well revenged, for, even if these writers had possessed ample talent and wit, they were not accustomed to the habits of the National Assembly, and knew nothing about the individual members, nor had any communication with them, therefore it was impossible for them to understand the spirit of their politics or the different shades of opinion. They gave long extracts from the speeches, but never seized the point of the arguments. Mirabeau was furious at the use of his name being given in this way, and wished to put a notice about it in the papers. Complaints came on all sides about Madame le Jay; Guiraudez and his colleague, puzzled by their proceedings and still more so by their want of success, were astounded by Mirabeau's reproaches, and soon repented of their foolishness. Therefore without making any fuss with Madame le Jay about the past,

another arrangement was made for the future. I don't know why I have written at such length about this sordid quarrel. If these recollections prove of sufficient interest to receive my further attention I shall retrench this portion of them.

The composition of this newspaper had been an amusement to all of us. Duroverai and I took it in turns to report the sittings, a few notes scribbled in the Assembly itself sufficed to remind us of the gist of the debates and the order in which they occurred; we never pretended to give a literal account of the inconceivable verbiage that issued from the Tribune. Mirabeau procured copies of all the most important speeches for us, and as they were all written beforehand, this was not a difficult matter. Very often the authors sent them of their own accord. Those who were most long-winded often complained that we had curtailed their inflated and pompous effusions. Very few were satisfied, though Mirabeau occasionally received their thanks, which he did not fail to pass on to us.

Chapelier said, "I suppose that in the provinces our speeches, when purged of all their verbiage and folly, may appear to be masterpieces." We took the greatest pains to report accurately all the different arguments offered by both parties in the more important discussions, and in this way our reports were perfectly impartial. Even as regards Mirabeau himself, though we sometimes made excuses for his vagaries, we never flattered him; with the exception of an occasional harmless joke we never allowed any person-

alities to appear, and it must be admitted that, except in a very few cases, Mirabeau was grateful to us for never being the instruments of revenging his "amour propre."

Sieyes complained rather bitterly once as to our criticisms on his "Rights of Man," and other principles of the new constitution. "Whatever happens I implore you not to embroil me with that man," said Mirabeau, "his vanity is implacable."

I have re-read numbers of the paper lately, and am astonished at the boldness we showed in attacking the Assembly. Continually I find aspersions cast on the want of order and cohesion in its procedure, both as regards financial and constitutional matters. The way in which general principles were discussed without descending to details, the insidious anticipation of decisions, the upsetting of all the old executive powers without creating any corresponding institutions in their places, the conversion of the Assembly into an information bureau, and its assumption of all ministerial duties, all these things we freely blamed. We presented a faithful picture of the incoherence, the disorder, and the passion that presided over its labours.

During the absence of Duroverai in November, 1790, M. de Reybaz took his place. My part of the work ended in March, when I wrote an account of the discussion on the monastical spirit and religious communities. The others continued their joint work for a few months longer, but eventually both they and Mirabeau abandoned the work, and the paper became a mere compilation of decrees and

speeches, which, except as to its title, bore no resemblance to our original publication.

I was often sick of this work, for it was not one that could give one any pleasure, and it left but little time for study or meditation. In spite of a few tolerable articles, the publication is a very mediocre one, and often quite worthless. I am, therefore, not surprised that it has fallen into the same neglect as have all the other ephemeral productions of the time.

Besides writing for this periodical, I continued adding my quota to Mirabeau's legislative labours. I will now resume my narrative, which will, I hope, be less tedious than this account of our newspaper.

CHAPTER VII

THE RIGHTS OF MAN

AFTER the insurrection in Paris, the National Assembly was soon completed. The majority of the nobles and the minority of the clergy joined themselves together. At this period, they were still treated with consideration, they were listened to in dignified silence, but without enthusiasm. The speeches of the President, Bailly, were too suave, in them civility got the better of sincerity, and though all hearts were embittered, his words only breathed peace and harmony.

This was a trick intended to deceive the people, but it failed in its object, and all confidence was destroyed by this misleading language.

The disorders which continued, the massacres which disgraced Paris, and which were extending into the provinces, decided several people to propose that an address should be issued by the National Assembly to the People. After the success of the first address I looked on the composition as belonging to my department. I therefore wrote one which was a sort of political sermon.

At its first reception it was praised, but at the second it

was rejected. I do not know if it controverted the opinions of certain people, but however it was, it received great praise but had no success, though it was printed in the "Courrier de Provence." However, it would have made no difference if it had been adopted or not, insurrections are not to be stopped by phrases. If such an exhortation could have succeeded, it would only have been as a precursor of vigorous measures.[1]

The Assembly was so afraid of offending the people, that they looked on any motion tending to repress disorders or censuring popular excess as a snare. A feeling of defiance possessed every one. Success had come through the People, therefore it was not possible to be severe with them; on the contrary, though the Assembly often declared that they were profoundly afflicted and perturbed by the violence committed by the bandits and brigands who burnt the castles and insulted the aristocracy, there was secret satisfaction at the terror caused by these outrages.

They had put themselves in the alternative of either fearing the Nobles or of making themselves the object of fear. They condemned only from a sense of propriety, they acted cautiously from a sense of what was politic, they paid compliments to Law and Order at the same time that they encouraged license.

Respect for the executive powers was only a formula, and when the ministers came to show their weakness and revealed their impotence, the Assembly, who remembered only too

[1] See Appendix.

well what it was to live in dread, were at least secretly delighted that fear had changed its abode. If, they thought, you were powerful enough to make the people respect you, we should also hold you in fear. This was the sentiment that appeared to dominate what was called the left side. It was a reaction from a feeling of terror.

I must not forget that, at this period, not only French opinion, but also that of Europe, was generally in favour of the democratic side in the Assembly. I can hardly describe the joy which prevailed in most sections of society at the contemplation of the Revolution, which had succeeded in felling the ancient Government of France.

One may say that, in Europe, everyone, except the nobility, had trembled for the fate of the Commons, and had felt that their deliverance was that of humanity itself. It was a trial at bar between the human race and the usurping and dominant classes. The unhappy events, which were fatal to the Revolution, now throw a dark shadow even on its cradle; one is ashamed to have admired at its commencement, a cause that one was forced to hate in its further progress; but an impartial historian must remember that, at this time, there was a general ferment of frenzied hopes, and that the enthusiasm excited by the greatness of the occasion, caused an insensibility to disorders which were looked on as unhappy accidents in the National triumph. Could the whole scaffolding of an antique and ruinous edifice collapse without wounding some unfortunate or obstinate people who would persist in trying to prop it up?

This was the opinion held by the best minds in Europe, the greatest philosophers, all the best philanthropists and friends of liberty. If it was an error, it was a universal one. England, as the freest and noblest of them all, declared herself more strongly than other countries. The destruction of the Bastille had caused general rejoicing. The Government had not allowed the event to be publicly celebrated at the theatres, out of regard for the King of France, but the entire Nation had been generous enough to sympathize with the French people in the fall of despotism.

This enthusiasm was sustained for nearly the whole existence of the first National Assembly. It diminished after the events of the 5th and 6th of October; many of its former admirers became indifferent, many wise men began to think that the French treated their King, who had done so much for them, with contumely, and to fear that the national character was too impetuous and violent to be fit for freedom. But this small number of dissentients made but little impression. The first important check to the enthusiasm for the Revolution, was the famous writing of Burke, in which he attacked singlehanded the gigantic strength of the Assembly, and portrayed these new legislators, in the midst of their power and glory, as maniacs, who might destroy everything, but who were incapable of establishing anything. This writing, sparkling with genius and eloquence, though it was composed in an age when imagination was on the decline, caused the formation of two parties in England. It has been only too well justified by

subsequent events, but it is possible that the cry of horror, that was raised by it against France, may have in some measure contributed to the violence which characterized this period. It is possible that by awakening the attention of the Government, and the holders of property, to the dangers of this new political religion, he became the saviour of Europe; but there was so much exaggeration in his writing, and he made use of arguments so contrary to freedom, that he was refuted on several points in a very plausible and even powerful manner. However, this publication of Burke's, this manifesto directed against the Assembly, had a tremendous effect in England. Germany, which had suffered more under the yoke of the aristocracy, continued in its unbounded admiration for the French legislators.

The united National Assembly at once began the work of drawing up the famous declaration of the Rights of Man. It was an American idea, and there was hardly anyone who did not consider that such a declaration was an indispensable preliminary. I well recall this long debate, which lasted for weeks, as a time of appalling dulness; useless discussions over words, metaphysical clap-trap, overwhelming garrulity, the Assembly was converted into a school of the Sorbonne, where all the political apprentices were trying their hands on these puerilities. After rejecting several suggestions, a committee of five was charged to draw up a new project. Mirabeau, one of the five, with his usual generosity, undertook the work and then gave the job to one of his friends. We found ourselves therefore with

Duroverai, Clavière and himself, composing, disputing, adding a word here, effacing some there, wearing ourselves out with this absurd task, and at last producing a piece of patchwork of supposed "Natural Rights," which had never had any existence! During the course of this melancholy compilation, I reflected on many things for the first time.

I felt the futility and absurdity of this work; it was only a puerile pretence. The Declaration of Rights, I said, may be made after the constitution has been established, but not before, for rights only exist by virtue of the laws, and cannot precede them; besides this, these maxims are dangerous; law-givers must not be bound by general propositions that may afterwards be necessarily modified and restrained, nor, above all, by false opinions. That "all men are born free and equal" is not true; they are not born free; on the contrary they are born in a state of weakness and necessary dependence; and where are they equal? where can they be so? If equality of fortune, talents, virtues, industry or condition is meant, the falsehood is manifest. Volumes would be required to give any reasonable explanation of the equality which was to be universally proclaimed. In a word, I had taken the side against the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and this time I convinced our small committee to follow my opinion; even Mirabeau, though he introduced the proposal, was bold enough to make objections to it in the Assembly, and proposed to postpone the Declaration of Rights till the constitution should be settled.

"I tell you," he said in his energetic and forcible manner, "that all declarations of rights preceding the formation of a constitution will never last longer than the calendar of the year." Mirabeau, who was always delighted with a happy phrase, never took the trouble to search into a subject in order to be able to argue a question, or to defend patiently any subject, the cause of which he was advancing. He grasped every idea with a marvellous facility, but never developed it; the power of refuting objections was wanting in him. This great art of the political orator was not his; his opinion on this question was all the more surprising as, in the previous sittings, he had been one of those who had upheld the necessity of this declaration. He was, therefore, violently reproached for having changed so suddenly. "What sort of a man is this?" said some one, "who uses his power over the Assembly to make it adopt first one opinion and then another? are we to be the playthings of his perpetual contradictions?" He had so much reason on his side that, if he had been able to express it, he might have won the cause; but he abandoned the question just at the moment when several members were preparing to join him. The wretched, pitiful prattling pursued its course, and this unfortunate Declaration of the Rights of Man was produced. I possess to-day a complete refutation of every article in it, written by the hand of a great master, and it carries every evidence with it of the contradictions, absurdities and dangers of this seditious bill, which was in itself sufficient to destroy the constitution of which it

formed part, and was like a powder magazine put underneath a building in order to blow it up at the first spark.

But if the Assembly had lost much time in its discussions on the rights of man, it made ample reparation during the sitting of the night of the 4th of August. Never was so much business got through in so short a time. Measures that would have required a year of careful thought were proposed, debated, voted and resolved on by general acclamation. I do not know how many laws were decreed; the abolition of feudal rights, of titles, of provincial privileges, three subjects which in themselves contained a whole system of jurisprudence and politics, were with ten or twelve others decided on in less time than the English Parliament would take over the first reading of any important bill. One would have thought that the Assembly was like a dying man who is in a hurry to make his will, or rather, who was giving away liberally what did not belong to him, and was taking credit in being generous at the expense of others.

I was a witness of this drama, which was so unforeseen that neither Sieyes, Mirabeau, nor several other eminent members were present.

They began by reporting a disorder in the provinces, the burning of the castles, and the gangs of bandits which were attacking the nobles and ravaging private properties of the country. The Duc d'Aiguillon, Noailles and several others of the minority of the aristocratic party, after hearing of these disastrous scenes, exclaimed that only a great act of

generosity could calm the populace, and that it was time to abandon all obnoxious privileges and to allow the benefits given by the Revolution to be generally felt. I do not know what frenzy seized the Assembly. It lost all composure, all forethought. Everyone proposed some sacrifice, or brought some new offering to be given up on the altar of the country, and was ready to despoil either himself or others. It was not possible to reflect, to object, or to ask for delay; an infectious sentimentality seized on everyone. This renunciation of all privileges, the abandonment of so many rights that were onerous to the people, these many sacrifices had a certain air of magnanimity which made one forget the indecent haste which was far from being the proper attitude of legislators. I saw, during that night, excellent and worthy members crying with joy at seeing the task advance so rapidly, and at finding themselves carried on the wings of enthusiasm far beyond their wildest hopes. It is true that everyone was not carried away by the same sentiments. Those who knew that they were ruined by whichever proposal had just been adopted, unanimously carried another one, out of revenge, in order that they should not be the only ones to suffer. But the whole Assembly was not in the secret of the motive powers, and these individuals were delighted at being able to profit by the general intoxication. The renunciation of provincial privileges was carried by their respective members. Those of Brittany had promised to maintain them, and were therefore more embarrassed than the others, but they advanced

in a body and declared that they would employ every means with their constituents to obtain the ratification of the renunciation of their privileges. This grand and superb transaction was necessary, in order to establish political unity in a Kingdom which had been formed by the aggregation of so many different states, of which each one had preserved some of its ancient rights or particular privileges, and it was necessary to destroy each separate constitution, in order to create one body of people capable of receiving the unique and new constitution.

The next day they began to reflect on what had been done, and discontent appeared on all sides. Mirabeau and Sieyes, each for their own particular reasons, condemned the follies of this excess of enthusiasm. "It is just like the French," said Mirabeau, "they are a whole month disputing over syllables, and then, in one night, they upset the whole of the ancient law and order of the Kingdom." The abolition of tithes had displeased Sieyes more than anything else. In subsequent sittings there was an attempt to amend and modify the greatest imprudences in these hasty decrees, but it was not easy to retract concessions already granted and regarded by the people as indisputable rights. Sieyes made a speech, full of force and reason, in which he showed that to abolish tithes without giving any indemnity was despoiling the clergy of their property in order to enrich the proprietors; for those who had bought their property less the value of the tithe now found themselves all at once the richer by a tenth part, which was gratuitously presented

to them. It was in this speech, which was impossible to refute, that he closed by the saying which has often been quoted: "They wish to be free, but they do not know how to be just." The opposition was so strong that Sieyes himselfe was not listened to; he was only regarded as an ecclesiastic who could consent to despoil himself of anything appertaining to his personal interest, and who was paying this erroneous tribute of respect to his cloth. It required but little more, and he would have been hissed and hooted. I saw him the next day full of bitter resentment and profound indignation against the injustice and stupidity of the Assembly, which he never forgave. He poured forth his bad temper in a conversation with Mirabeau, who said to him: "My dear Abbé, you have unchained the bull, and now you complain that he uses his horns." These two men had always a very paltry idea of the National Assembly; they were well able to appraise its faults, but they only gave it their approbation on the condition that their own opinions should always prevail. If they were applauded, then, "the majority was full of good sense, if left to itself." If, on the contrary, they were not followed, then, "They were fools, deceived by sedition." I frequently saw Mirabeau's opinion tested by this thermometer, and assuredly he was not alone in this. Sieyes might convince them that his contempt for them was sincere, because he did not try to win their applause, and kept a dignified silence, but Mirabeau, eager to mount the tribune, how could he persuade anyone that he was indifferent to their blame or

praise? Both of them felt that an assembly consisting of one chamber only had no regulating balance, and the sitting of the 4th of August showed to what point it could be carried away by panic, causing it to lose all sense of proportion. These decrees of the 4th of August, instead of putting an end to all the brigandage and violence that prevailed, showed the people their strength, and convinced them that all the attacks on the aristocracy would be left unpunished, even if they might not be rewarded. Once more, nothing that is conceded through fear ever achieves its object. Those whom you wish to disarm by concessions will only redouble their confidence and audacity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VETO

SOON after the discussions on the decrees of the 4th of August, the questions of the new constitution arose, and one of the most important of these was that of the "Veto." It must not be thought that this subject produced a regular debate, like those in the English House of Commons; as soon as the combat began, lists of orators in favour of or against the question were prepared, each of them appeared in turn, armed with his portfolio, and read a dissertation which never had any connection with the one that preceded it. I cannot conceive anything more wearisome than this kind of academic sitting, this reading of pamphlets full of repetitions and with no connection with each other. A debate in which each one speaks to reply to, or to make an attack on others, exerts all the faculties of the mind, and holds everyone's interest; but these discourses, composed in the study, refuted objections which had never been made, and did not answer those that had.

One was always at the same stage; every orator began the question as if nothing had been said before on the subject by anyone but himself.

Mirabeau had quite made up his mind to uphold the

absolute veto, which was regarded as essential to the preservation of the Monarchy, but he had allowed himself to be indoctrinated on the subject by the Marquis de Caseaux, the author of an unintelligible book on the management of companies, and of another entitled, "A Simple Idea for the Constitution," which nobody had been able either to read or to understand. I think that Mirabeau was not sorry for once in a way to be independent of us. He therefore concealed from us his alliance with his new and heterodox friend, and only told us that he was quite prepared, and had some notes and headings for his speech, which he would amplify on the Tribune. There had been so many detestably bad speeches delivered, that everyone was rejoicing at Mirabeau's presence, but he had hardly begun to speak, than I recognized, phrase by phrase, the doctrine and the style of Caseaux. The clumsy constructions, the singular words, the long periods, the obscure reasonings did not long hold the attention of the Assembly. It was discovered that the "absolute veto" was being upheld, which was a fresh reason for raising murmurs against him. Mirabeau, who had hardly looked at the rubbish, now perceived all its faults, and quickly threw himself into some ordinary commonplaces against despotism in general, and, by some salient points, obtained his ordinary tribute of applause from the galleries, but when he returned to his notes, the tumult began again, and he had considerable difficulty in finishing his speech, in spite of his courage, which never deserted him in a crisis.

The result was that Mirabeau offended the popular party by upholding the "absolute veto," but his speech was so obscure that those in the galleries did not know on which side he had spoken, and the Palais Royal, which was frantic with all the partisans of the Veto, still considered Mirabeau as the most zealous of its antagonists. But what was enough to destroy the popularity of others had no effect on him. On this occasion, the left side thought that he had affected to be obscure, in order to twist his opinion in any sense that he liked, so that Caseaux's trash was attributed to his deep cunning and machiavelism. I never saw him really disconcerted except on this occasion; he confessed to us that, as he proceeded to read his speech, he broke out into a cold sweat, and that he suppressed half of it without being able to supplement it with anything original, because, in his confidence, he had never studied the subject for himself. We patched up this speech a little before it was printed in the "Courrier de Provence," but its original strange and obscure character did not disappear. This is the way in which the most important legislative matters were treated! "ex ungue leonem." This was the first constitutional question in which the people took a lively interest, and one can imagine how far they were able to understand it. In their eyes the Veto took all sorts of imaginable forms; it seemed to them to be a monster ready to devour everything. I shall never forget going to Paris with Mirabeau the same day, or possibly the day after; there were people waiting for his carriage outside le Jay's shop who threw themselves

on him imploring him with tears in their eyes not to consent to the King having the "Veto absolu." They were beside themselves: "Monsieur le Comte, you are the father of the people, you must save us, you must defend us against these wretches who wish to deliver us over to despotism; if the King has the veto, there is no use in a National Assembly, all is lost and we shall be slaves:" and a thousand other extravagant demands arose from their breaking hearts. On these occasions, Mirabeau always showed to advantage; he calmed them by vague generalities, and sent them away with the civility of a true Patrician.

When it came to the division on the question of the Veto, Mirabeau did not vote; this is why his name was not on the list which was taken to the Palais Royal of those who had voted for the "veto absolu." This was certainly cowardly conduct on his part, but he hid it under the pretence of holding the Assembly in contempt. It was absurd to pass laws independently of each other; they ought to have been compared, in order to see whether they would agree with each other or whether they would be of a contradictory character. A law which might be good if combined with another would have quite a different effect if taken alone. It was only the presumption and inexperience of the National Assembly that made it act in this way and, day by day, pass new laws without having before them the whole plan of the Constitution. For example, in this case, before discussing the Veto it would have been well to know if the legislative body was to be divided into two chambers,

or if there was only to be a single assembly. The settling of this question was an indispensable preliminary, for if the legislative body was not divided, the "veto absolu" was a necessity in order to prevent one body from usurping the whole power; but, at the same time, it was impossible to enforce the "veto absolu," for a King is powerless against the whole force of the united will of the National Assembly. A King who appears to be opposed to the wishes of the nation's representatives plays a dangerous game, and occupies a post that he is unable to defend. If the legislative body had been divided into two sections, the "veto absolu" would have been less necessary, because there would not have been the same likelihood of both sections agreeing with each other. The great fault of the Assembly was that it did not work together, and, therefore, it produced an irregular edifice without proportion or accuracy, in which some parts were too strong and others too weak, an incoherent mass which was unable to sustain the least shock, which attained a gigantic elevation, but whose foundations only rested on the bare surface of the soil. But this error arose from the desire for prompt action and the wish to carry some motion, or to reap the first fruits of another. There was no community of interest, no forethought. It was considered a good thing to steal a march on the Assembly with sudden propositions and to introduce subjects in a contraband and unexpected manner. A constitutional committee had been appointed, but this body, full of jealousies and divisions, could not agree together or direct

the course of business to a common purpose. It was a miniature reproduction of the Assembly, composed of the same elements, the same prejudices, the same ambitions for supremacy and personal distinction, the same selfish struggles, in short, everyone took upon himself the task of introducing whatever subjects he preferred, and often these were chosen with no other reason than the desire to be to the front. Study and reflection found no place in the Assembly, laws were passed almost at the point of the sword, as if they were being carried by assault. After having demolished everything, it was necessary to build it all up again, and the Assembly had such a high opinion of itself, especially the extreme left side, that it would have willingly undertaken to make laws for the whole world. Historians are willing enough to recount the misfortunes of the Revolution, but it is quite as essential to notice the original faults which brought about these misfortunes. If one wished to trace them still further back, it would be necessary to consider the composition of the Assembly and, above all, to examine the circumstances which produced the defiance, the struggle, the quarrels of the different orders and, finally, the victory of the Commons and the fall of the power of the throne.

The prevailing character of the French is that of conceit: every member of the Assembly considered himself capable of undertaking everything; never were there so many men who imagined themselves to be born legislators, and who considered they were intended to repair all the faults of the

past, to mend all the errors of human nature, and to provide for the happiness of future generations. Doubt never entered their minds; their own infallibility carried through all their measures, however contradictory. A numerous minority continually found fault with them in vain, and protested against their measures, but the more the minority attacked them the more pleased were they with themselves. When the King dared to send them some modest remonstrances on the decrees of the 4th of August and on the Declaration of Rights, they were astonished that the ministers had the audacity to criticise their labours, and M. Necker, who was the author of this message, began from that time to decline in their estimation.

I have been able to compare the English and French in the same conditions, as, for some time, I followed the sittings of the English Parliament as well as those of the National Assembly. There is no more striking contrast in the characters of the two nations than the shy reserve of the Englishman and the confidence of the Frenchman in himself. I often said that if you proposed to the first hundred men you met in the streets of Paris and to the same number in the streets of London to undertake the charge of government, that ninety-nine of them would accept in Paris and ninety-nine would refuse in London.

A great part of the business transacted at the Tribune was manufactured outside the walls of the Assembly. A Frenchman had no scruples in delivering a speech which he had not composed, and in taking the credit of this sort

of public imposition; but there are few Englishmen, not one amongst people of repute, who would lend themselves to being merely actors in a theatre. A Frenchman would put himself forward on any subject that might be suggested to him, without troubling himself with the consequences; an Englishman would be afraid to exhibit himself unless he had sufficiently studied his subject so as to be able to reply to the objections to it and to sustain the opinions he had advanced. It costs a Frenchman very little to make an assertion, but an Englishman is not in a hurry to produce a fact before the public; he wishes to be sure of his authority for it, to trace it to its source, and to master its details. A Frenchman thinks he can get over all difficulties by a little wit, and he is ready to attack subjects about which he knows nothing—it was thus that Mirabeau made himself the spokesman for the committee on mines, without having even an inkling of knowledge of the subject. An Englishman would expose himself to indelible ridicule if he dared to undertake the workings of a department of which he knew nothing, and he is much more likely to refuse to undertake what he is capable of performing, than to be ambitious enough to try to do what is beyond his powers. A Frenchman thinks that wits are sufficient for everything, an Englishman is persuaded that it is necessary to have science and practical knowledge. It was a French gentleman who was asked if he could play the harpsichord, and who replied, "I cannot tell you, as I have never tried, but I'll see." There is humour in this anecdote, and if you

augment the idea, put the government in the place of music and the legislator in place of the French gentleman, you would have had twelve hundred of them at once!

Romilly had made an interesting study on the rules of procedure observed by the English House of Commons; these rules were the result of reasoned experience, and the more one examines them, the more admirable do they appear. They are customs that are carefully observed by a body that is most unready to introduce innovations; they are not written down, and a great deal of trouble and care was necessary to get them drawn up. This little code indicated the best way of answering questions, of preparing motions, of debating them, of taking the votes, of naming committees, of treating of the different ways of conducting business; in one word, it explained all the tactics of a political assembly. I had translated this writing at the beginning of the sitting of the States General; Mirabeau presented it to, and placed it in, the office of the Commons when the question arose of making the rules for the National Assembly. "We are not English, and do not wish to be English," was the answer given to him. Not the smallest attention was paid to this writing, which had been printed; they did not even deign to inquire what happened in such a celebrated assembly as the Parliament of Great Britain. National vanity was wounded at the idea of borrowing wisdom from another nation, and they preferred to persist to the end in dangerous and bad methods of debate.

The sitting of the 4th of August was the proof.

When Brissot alluded to the constitution he generally remarked, "See what England has lost" (*Voilà ce qui a perdu l'Angleterre*). Sieyes, Dupont, Condorcet, Garat, and many others held precisely the same opinions. One day Duroverai pretended to be astonished, and said, "How is England lost? When did you get the news? In which latitude has she disappeared?" the joke was not on Brissot's side. Mirabeau, who was then composing a speech against Mounier, attributed the silly remark to him in order to have the pleasure of retorting with the little stolen *bon mot*. Mounier complained of this in one of his writings in which he reveals the inaccuracies of which Mirabeau was guilty during the debate which he describes.

CHAPTER IX

MIRABEAU AND "ÉGALITÉ"

I HAVE not many recollections of the succeeding month of September, but at that time I saw, with Mirabeau, a good deal of two very different men; one of them, Camille Desmoulins, had written several articles signed the "attorney-general of the Lanterne." It must not be supposed, however, that he encouraged the populace to *lanterner*, of which he is accused by M. Bertrand de Molleville; on the contrary, he pointed out the dangers and injustice of these executions, but in a tone of jesting and frivolity which was most improper for such a subject. Camille appeared to be what is called a "good fellow," excitable, thoughtless, without judgement, as ignorant as he was inconsequent, not wanting in intelligence, but having the most elementary notions as regards politics. Whilst walking with him, I tried to explain the English Constitution to him a little, of which he spoke with as much ignorance as if it had been a question concerning Monomotapa. Three years later, Camille had become, owing to his Jacobinism and friendship with Robespierre, a considerable personage; his talents had matured, and in a writing

"ÉGALITÉ"

in which he gives an account of himself after the beginning of the Revolution, he alludes to me with a passing good-natured recollection, and says that I was an emissary of Pitt's, sent to mislead Mirabeau, and that I was always preaching at Versailles about the English Constitution. I have not read this work of his, but I am told it is very well written, and that Camille was one of those who shaped himself according to circumstances.

The other man was La Clos, the author of "*Liaisons dangereuses.*" This La Clos, who was attached to the Duke of Orleans, was a gloomy, taciturn man, having the appearance and expression of a conspirator, reserved, intelligent, but so uncongenial that I hardly ever spoke to him, though I saw him often. I do not know what connection he had with Mirabeau. The events of the 5th and 6th of October have been imputed to the Duke of Orleans, and le Châtelet implied that Mirabeau was in this conspiracy. The National Assembly declared that there was no reason for this accusation against either of them. But the verdict of the Assembly is not that of History, and a good many veils would have to be lifted before judgement could be pronounced on this matter. In spite of my intimacy at this period with Mirabeau, if he was connected with the Duke of Orleans, he never took me into his confidence about it. It is an unknown mystery to me, if indeed there is any mystery about it. In recalling all the little circumstances which could not fail to betray such an imprudent and confident man as Mirabeau, I find nothing that can include him in this plot against the Court.

It is true, however, that his acquaintance with La Clos showed, at least on the Duke's part, a wish to flatter and make use of Mirabeau, who went several times to Montrouge and, if I am not mistaken, saw the Duke of Orleans once or twice, but this he might have done without being concerned in any conspiracy with him. I remember hearing him talk of the Duke, praising his natural abilities and saying that, as regards morality, no blame must be imputed to him, for he had lost the sense for it and could no longer distinguish between good and evil. About this time, Mirabeau said to Duroverai and me: "I am astonished at finding myself a philosopher! I was born to be an adventurer, but who knows? They are going to dismember the kingdom, and I have some influence in Provence." Duroverai began to chaff and said: "He already believes himself Comte de Provence."—"Well," said Mirabeau, "many others have started lower." In his imagination he always foresaw upheavals and destruction.

The only fact which appears to me to have been against him was concerning a book he was preparing for publication, and about which we were kept in ignorance. When the Assembly left Versailles to go to Paris, Duroverai and I were staying at Mirabeau's house, he being away, to arrange and collect some of our papers. Le Jay arrived suddenly in travelling dress, leaving his carriage at the door; he was very much upset, and had some difficulty in making us understand the cause of his concern. He had been to some place, of which I am ignorant, to fetch the edition of a book that had been clandestinely printed and that ought to have

arrived a fortnight earlier, and which he did not dare to bring into Paris. "What was the edition? What book? What was it about?"—"It is," said le Jay, "the book against the Royal Power."—"Against the Royal Power! Show us a copy of it." It was a small volume, with a preface by Mirabeau and the name of the author. I do not remember the exact title, but I think it was "*de la Royauté, extrait de Milton.*" It was, in fact, either translated or abridged from Milton; scattered passages were strung together to form a connected republican doctrine. I remember seeing Mirabeau and his friend Servan occupying themselves with this translation. Servan, who was Vice-governor of the Pages and, like all the people belonging to Versailles, an enemy of the Court, was subsequently Minister of War. After the events of the 5th and 6th of October, the publication of such a book was not only a libel but an act of high treason, as coming from a member of the National Assembly. We were all the more annoyed about it as the first suspicions of those about Mirabeau fell naturally on us as being Republicans by birth and also being familiar with the English language. But, apart from our own interest in the matter, that of Mirabeau was alone enough to alarm us. Duroverai succeeded so well in frightening le Jay, that he already imagined himself at the Châtelet or La Tournelle He consented to everything and, the same day, took the whole edition into the house and burnt it. Le Jay only managed to save a dozen copies. This expedition concluded, he returned to Paris, much pleased, to tell his wife of the danger he had been in from which we had extricated him.

Madame le Jay, who had reckoned on the success of the lampoon, fell upon her husband and reproached him for his stupidity, and impressed upon him, at the same time, her own superiority in strength and intelligence. She then went on to denounce Duroverai to Mirabeau, but he was not foolish enough to doubt that, under the circumstances, this book would have been his ruin. What he would have liked would have been to keep it back for some great occasion, but he had enough difficulty to defend himself in the matter without venturing upon any complaint as to the loss of a few thousand francs.

I confess that in thinking it over since, and regarding the dates, the postponing of the edition, the moment when it ought to have been ready, le Jay's journey to fetch it, and the mystery which he was told to observe about it, I am almost tempted to believe that there was some deep design in the composition of this work, and that Mirabeau was concerned in the secret of the events of the 5th and 6th of October. But, on the other hand, I knew that this compilation had been put in hand some time before, and that Mirabeau's mania for publication was so great that he was carried away by it beyond all considerations of prudence. What was, I think, the case, supposing that the Versailles insurrection was instigated by the agents of the Duke of Orleans, was that La Clos was too clever to confide everything to Mirabeau's indiscretion, but that he had secured him conditionally, leaving plenty of cover and possibility of retreat from the position open to both sides.

It is impossible not to believe that there was some connection between them. "Instead of a glass of brandy, they have given a bottle": this is how he explained the Paris movement. I suppose that if the King had taken flight, Mirabeau would have proposed or supported the appointment of the Duke of Orleans as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and that he would have been prime minister. Such a romantic idea might very well have suggested itself to him, and his fury with the Duke of Orleans has raised the suspicion that he was thrown over by him in this expectation. Perhaps M. de Lafayette is aware of the secret of these events which, after all, might have been brought about, without the help of any conspiracy, by the spontaneous movement of the people, who were terrified by the fear of famine which had at this moment produced the famine itself. The people attributed the dearth to the aristocracy; it was, they said, the aristocracy who had the corn cut while it was still green, who paid the bakers to be idle, who diverted trade, who threw the flour in the river, in short, there was no lie or absurdity which did not appear probable to them. The popular newspapers never ceased spreading these scurrilous falsehoods.

The arrival of a new regiment at Versailles renewed all their fears, the entertainments given in their honour at the palace were inconceivably inauspicious; it was not a conspiracy, because it is impossible for five hundred people to conspire publicly at a banquet, but they had sung "*O Richard, O mon roi!*" they had insulted the national

colours, they had paraded the Dauphin in public. The King and Queen, delighted to receive these signs of affection, increased the enthusiasm by their presence. At any other time, it would not have been considered a crime for the young officers of the King's Guard to be roused to enthusiastic affection for the Royal Family. The clouds that hung over it, the misfortunes with which it was menaced still excited chivalrous and honourable sentiments amongst a young aristocracy devoted by their position to the defence of their sovereign. But, as soon as the account of this scene in the Palace was spread abroad amongst the public, with all the exaggerations to which it lent itself, it was thought that it must have been arranged with the intention of putting the Revolution in an obnoxious light, and of forming a new league in defence of the King. The banquet was denounced by the Assembly itself as a sign of a conspiracy of the Court against the people. The right side denied the calumny with fury. Mirabeau, primed by Servan, threw himself into the midst of the tumult, and declared that he was prepared to denounce by name all the principal actors in the sacrilegious orgy, provided that it should be previously decreed that the person of the King alone should be held sacred and inviolable. This expression, which carried accusation against the Queen, caused the right side to tremble, and made the democrats themselves afraid to go any further.

If at this juncture Mirabeau had put himself in opposition to the popular mania, he might easily have represented the affair in a different aspect, and made the signs of affection

shown for the King assume a favourable appearance; he might have openly regretted that anyone could have imagined that they were not shared by the Assembly and the nation itself, or he might even have proposed that a similar fête might be given where the King would be surrounded by all the representatives of France. At the same time the dismissal of the Flanders Regiment, whose presence was not necessary, might have been demanded, but it must be allowed that the Assembly, which prated so often of its attachment to the King, never took any real steps to give it expression.

The scarcity which now prevailed kept the people in a state of agitation; this and the scene at the Palace appeared in those days sufficient excuses to explain the Paris insurrection and the invasion of Versailles.

It was only subsequently that these events were attributed to a plot hatched by the Duke of Orleans. This grave suspicion assumed an appearance of truth when it became known that M. de Lafayette had required the Duke's absence from Paris and had forced him to depart for England. The veil has not been lifted from the background of this intrigue, but I recollect that two years later, in a confidential interview with the Bishop of Autun (M. de Talleyrand), he said these remarkable words to me: "The Duke of Orleans is the vessel into which all the filth of the Revolution has been thrown."

This is what my memory recalls to me of Mirabeau's conduct during these days of the 5th and 6th of October.

On the 5th we were dining with M. de Servan in the palace called "les Petites-Ecuries," where he had lodgings as Governor of the Pages. From the windows, which overlooked the big courtyard, we saw the arrival of the Parisian mob, the fishwives, market porters, and whole multitude clamouring only for bread. The Versailles National Guard was stationed outside the precincts of the Palace, the King's guards, both foot and horse, were in the outer enclosure of the big and little courtyards. There was some tumult which we could not quite make out. Mirabeau was not long with us; in fact, I do not remember that he was dining with us. Though the crowd was great, and one did not know what might happen, we walked about freely, we saw the King's carriages turn aside out of the by-streets, and we thought there must be a question of the Royal Family's flight. Tired of wandering about, at eight o'clock in the evening I went to the Assembly, which presented a curious spectacle: it had been invaded and filled by the mob; in the galleries were sitting men and women armed with halberds, pikes and bludgeons. The sitting had just been suspended, but a messenger arrived from the King to request the President to send a deputation to the Palace, and to declare the sitting permanent. I went to fetch Mirabeau, whom I found already in bed, though it was only eleven o'clock. When we arrived at the Assembly, where the President was uselessly expending his strength in order to produce a little calm, Mirabeau raised his arrogant voice and bade him enforce respect for the Assembly by ejecting

all the strangers who were within its precincts. His popularity was needed to carry him through, but, little by little, the crowd dispersed, and the members began a quiet debate on some question of penal law. I was in a gallery where a fishwife was conducting herself with an air of authority, and was directing the movements of a hundred women and young people, who waited for her orders to cheer or to be silent; she called out in a familiar way to the members, and asked: "Who is that speaking down there? Make that jabberer hold his tongue! That's not the question, we must have bread, that's what we want! Let our little darling Mirabeau speak, we wish to hear him." Our little darling Mirabeau was called for by the whole company, but he was not the man to waste his eloquence on these occasions, and, as he said, his popularity was not to be cheapened and vulgarized.

Towards midnight, an aide-de-camp announced M. de Lafayette's approach at the head of the Paris National Guard, and his presence was looked on as a safeguard; his soldiers had renewed their oath of fidelity to the King and the laws, and the mob became calm at the assurances given by the King, which had been carefully spread abroad. About two o'clock in the morning, we went home, the Assembly still sitting. When I awoke, I heard a confused account of what had passed, of the invasion of the Palace and the disarming of the Guards. It was all attributed, at that time, to misunderstandings, to indiscretions and to quarrels which had accidentally arisen. Mirabeau went

early to the Assembly, and I heard that he had opposed the demand made by the King to bring the Assembly itself to the Palace, as a means of contenting the mob. This assumed dignity, which he gave as a reason for only sending a deputation, was very suspicious; was it the moment to stand on etiquette, and could there be a greater duty than to surround the monarch when he was in danger? It is certain that, if there was a plot against him, and if Mirabeau had been an accomplice he could not have behaved in any other way; but, on the other hand, why should the Assembly, which was not in the plot, suddenly have fallen in with this opinion? This is all the more reason for believing that he had only availed himself of the general feeling, and that there was no premeditation about his motion. There was at this moment a marked opposition between the Court and the National Assembly, because the King had only given a semi-approbation to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and to the explanatory decrees respecting it of the 4th of August: advantage was taken of the prevailing disturbance to demand of the King his full and frank consent to it, in order to make it appear that his refusal had been one of the causes of the Revolution. Mounier was presiding over the Assembly; Mirabeau was very jealous of him and perhaps, unconsciously, he had no other motive than to get the better of him and to do him harm by representing his advice as being derogatory to the dignity of the Nation.

Several members with whom the people were furious had taken flight, expecting nothing more from a revolution

which used such methods of action. They did not dare to go to Paris and therefore abandoned their seats. Lally-Tolendal and Mounier were of this number, of which there were fifty-five or fifty-six. This desertion was not justifiable, but, before accusing them of cowardice, it would be well to consider the violences they had undergone, and to have been oneself exposed for some time to similar outrages.

CHAPTER X

QUESTIONS OF FINANCE

I HAVE omitted to speak of Mirabeau's celebrated speech on the Nation's bankruptcy, in order to unite under one heading a few subjects connected with finance.

Mirabeau did not understand this subject thoroughly, though he had published several works on it, such as "*la Banque de Saint-Charles*," "*la Dénonciation de l'Agiotage*," etc. He had two assistants, Panchaud and Clavière; Panchaud said of Mirabeau that he was the best man in the world to speak on topics of which he knew nothing. Quick perceptions and a happy method of expressing himself gave him the power of imposing on superficial minds. When, in consequence of the indiscretions of the Revolution, the revenue was diminished and the taxes became of no value, M. Necker, in difficulties to keep the immense machinery working by a trickling stream that would shortly run dry, proposed to the Assembly the raising of a loan which he endeavoured to make attractive to the leaders; he wished to make use of the credit of the *caisse d'escompte*. Clavière, who had, I think, some personal dislike for this Society, of which, indeed, many

just complaints were made, because its administration had been of a stockjobbing nature, engaged Mirabeau to declare himself against this plan. The Assembly entangled itself with the organization of the loan and put its customary intelligence into the business. The consequence was that it had no success whatever, and that the celebrated National loan, which had been talked about with so much pride, was a complete failure. Soon afterwards, M. Necker was obliged to produce another plan, a kind of patriotic borrowing of the quarter of the revenue. This time, Mirabeau resolved to support the Minister; he did not like him, and no longer had any dealings with him; the intimacy which Duroverai and Mallouet had wished to encourage had had no results; there was a suspicion that he only supported the scheme in order to attribute all the responsibility for it, as well as its failure, to M. Necker. Some idle talkers, who thought that the Assembly would compromise its dignity by adopting a ministerial measure without changing anything in it, proposed some modifications; Mirabeau raised his voice against any proposals of this sort, and urged the Assembly to accept the scheme as it was proposed and not to touch it in any way. The chief argument which he used was the failure of the first loan, which was attributed by the friends of the Government not to circumstances but to the Assembly's having ruined it by mistaken alterations, and that, he argued, caused the dangerous state of the country's credit, and the draining of the revenue, and he represented the national bankruptcy as a calamity by which France was incessantly

menaced. The picture he drew of so commonplace a subject was of great force, it even rose to sublimity, for he treated it in the style of Cicero or Bossuet. Those who heard the speech will never forget it; it excited feelings of terror, and the image arose of a yawning abyss in which one heard the groans of the engulfed victims.

The success was triumphant; there was not the feeblest attempt at a reply. The Assembly was subjugated by this dominating power which seized hold of a multitude as though it were a single individual, and the Government's scheme was adopted with complete confidence. After this day, Mirabeau was looked on as a unique being; he had no rival; other orators existed, but he alone was eloquent, and the impression he produced was all the more striking as this speech was delivered on the spur of the moment and could not have been prepared beforehand. At the moment of his greatest success, he proved that when he owed everything to himself his efforts were far superior to those that were made on his behalf by his friends.

Molé, the principal actor at the Théâtre-Francais, heard this speech; he had come to present a petition at the head of a deputation of comedians; Mirabeau's power, his dramatic descriptions, his sublime voice, made an extremely vivid impression on him; much affected by it, he approached him, in order to offer him his tribute of praise: "Ah! monsieur le comte," he said in a voice of pathos, "what a speech! And with what expression you delivered it! Mon dieu! How you have mistaken your vocation!" He was amused on per-

ceiving the doubtfulness of this compliment, but Mirabeau was much flattered by it.[1]

Some few days after this, at the beginning of October, the King being already in Paris, it was resolved to hasten the effect of the Government proposals by issuing an address to the country from the National Assembly. Mirabeau was charged with the work of composing it, and he transferred the business to me. I undertook it all the more willingly as I flattered myself that a solemn address weighed with the seal of authority might serve as a vehicle for truths

[1] (This is part of the speech to which M. Dumont alludes:) "Oh! If the least of the solemn promises made to us do not guarantee our respect for the public good faith and our horror of the disgraceful word 'bankrupt,' I should dare to suspect secret motives, perhaps, alas, concealed even from ourselves, which cause us imprudently to draw back from announcing an act of great devotion and renunciation which will certainly be inefficacious if it be not swift. I say to those who familiarize themselves with the idea of not keeping their public engagements by the fear of making sacrifices and of imposing taxes;—what then is bankruptcy, if it be not the most cruel, the most iniquitous, the most unequal, the most disastrous of taxes? Listen to me, my friends, for a moment; two centuries of depredations and robbery have opened an abyss in which the Kingdom is nearly engulfed; this frightful chasm must be bridged. Here is the list of the property holders of the Nation: choose the richest among them, in order to sacrifice fewer citizens, but do not spare them, for is it not better that a few should perish in order to save the mass of the Nation? Consider! Do not these two thousand personages possess enough riches to pay off the deficit? Bring back order to your finances, and peace and prosperity to the Kingdom! Strike! Sacrifice these victims, throw them into the abyss, it will close on them. You draw back with horror, inconsequent men, cowards, do you not perceive? etc., etc."

of the greatest importance; I did not wish to palliate the excesses of the Revolution, but, on the contrary, to show with all the strength in my power that the nation would be lost if she let herself be misled any longer by false ideas of liberty disguised in the odious mask of license. This composition was not so rapidly put together as the one to the King, because the subject was more delicate and complicated. It required a great deal of tact not to offend the Assembly, which was as exacting as a despot and took offence at the slightest and most indirect reproofs. I took three days over the work; it was very well received, but it had rather the effect of a sermon on the listeners, so it was not much applauded and was soon forgotten. I have found among my papers the original rough draft of the address just as I gave it to Mirabeau; there are one or two marks of his pen on it, and the committee of editors made a few slight alterations in it.

Some days later, Duroverai told me of a proposal that had been made to him by a Paris banker, M. Delessert; this was nothing less than an offer of money as a sign of gratitude for the service we had rendered in supporting the plan of the Government, for everyone knew what influence we had over Mirabeau, and my part in the composition of his speeches and addresses to the nation was more than suspected. M. Delessert spoke in the name of several bankers, and advanced a hundred louis as his contribution. Duroverai had neither accepted nor refused, but he said he would speak to me on the subject. I was very angry at his not

having at once given the most decided refusal, as he would most assuredly have done if the proposal of these gentlemen had preceded instead of followed the service we had rendered. We had not considered them in our action, and they owed us nothing; I only saw in this pretended gratitude the offer of a salary in disguise; that such a gift could not be openly acknowledged showed that it was an improper one to receive; the slightest suspicion of personal interest in the matter appeared to me so disgraceful that Duroverai had some difficulty in persuading me that there was no insult intended by M. Delessert's offer.

When the Assembly was transferred to Paris, it held its sittings at the Archevêché. I insisted on Mirabeau proposing a vote of thanks to M. Bailly and to M. de Lafayette, and I composed a speech in which I represented the difficulties of their political conduct in the midst of these stormy times. As he was very jealous of their popularity, this proposition did not please him at first, but I knew that he would not resist the pleasure of being the author of a motion which was already prepared and approved of by him. The Mayor and the Commandant of Paris were all the more flattered as they did not expect this, and I had the pleasure of being the means of bringing together, for at all events a few days, men whose union appeared to me advantageous for the public welfare. The jealousies, hatred and ill-will between the principal characters of the Revolution were some of the maladies of the time; if it had been possible to make them act together, they would have given a uniform action to the

Assembly and the nation, but the wishes that I formed in this respect were only the dreams of inexperience. It is only a strong government that can arrest individual passions and force them to act in common; in a weak government, a number of cross-currents are always to be found. Every candidate for public favour wishes to make his own little independent fortune. They all hate each other as rivals and weaken each other until they eventually fall under the power of one individual.

M. de Lafayette was now at the zenith of his celebrity; he was master at the Palace, the National Guard was devoted to him; his manners were modest, his intentions pure, his personal character commanded everyone's esteem. His home, under the auspices of a virtuous and religious wife, was distinguished by that propriety of conduct which the French nobles had too often forgotten. I was invited to dine with him in the company of Mirabeau, M. de la Rochefoucauld, M. de Liancourt and many others. I rejoiced in a reconciliation which I had brought about without anyone suspecting me. As far as I can recollect, it was at this time that the question arose of Mirabeau entering the Government; there were negotiations and parleyings on the subject, M. Necker was almost won over, the King had nearly consented, but there was one *sine qua non*, Mirabeau wished to remain a member of the Assembly, without which, his entry into the Government would prevent his having the power to serve the public cause. There was some suspicion, some indiscretion, or perhaps some secret betrayal, for, just

as the matter was being arranged, Lameth or Noailles or Duport or some one on that side brought forward a motion in the Assembly to declare that no member could accept a place in the executive, and no minister sit in the Assembly. Mirabeau opposed it in vain; Duroverai, I think, wrote a very conclusive speech on the question. The votes were very equally divided, but Lameth's motion carried the day. It was in vain that the English custom was quoted, in fact, the example of the English, instead of carrying weight, had the contrary effect. The least idea of imitation wounded the vanity of the innovators, and they pretended to establish a monarchy without retaining in it a single monarchical element. One can imagine how exasperated Mirabeau must have been when all his ambitions were ruined by Lameth's motion.

Sieyes had made two suggestions in the Committee on the Constitution which had been rejected, and which, according to his usual custom, he took no pains to get adopted. One of them was the forming of a civic conscription by which all young men were to be solemnly enrolled as active citizens. I approved of this idea, not as a great legislative measure, but as a means of inspection and education for young people. I wrote a little speech, of which Mirabeau took charge, and which resulted in the unanimous passing of the measure. Sieyes, though he was pleased at the discomfiture of the Committee, was nevertheless annoyed with Mirabeau, and, still more, with me; it was no difficulty for him to guess my share in the matter, because he had spoken

on the subject in a conversation with the Bishop of Chartres, and I had expressed my regret at the proposition being discarded.

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I have forgotten to mention a measure which was passed at Versailles after the King had come to Paris, and which was suggested by Duroverai: this was the establishing of martial law. Insurrections had become so frequent that the duties of municipal officers had become more difficult than if they had been in the presence of an enemy. In many places the troops were pervaded with the same spirit as the populace, and instead of upholding authority, put themselves on the side of sedition; the Revolution existed in the army as in the nation. A handful of mutineers sufficed to make the governor of a citadel tremble; a mere act of personal defence became a capital crime, and the clamours of the populace were more formidable than the batteries of a foreign army. For some time past Mirabeau had said that this dictatorship of the people must cease, and he was the first, if I am not mistaken, to propose martial law, and it produced keen opposition. It is a remarkable thing that he should have resisted the popular side in this circumstance without losing any of his own popularity. Duroverai had drawn up his scheme of law after the English method. England was often quoted in this discussion, but always incorrectly. There were, at this time, in Versailles, two English barristers with whom I was intimate: Duroverai, who used great activity in employing means to pass his

project, begged me to ask them to write a letter to Mirabeau to explain the character of martial law and do away with the false ideas that had been conceived on the subject. I assured him that this attempt would be useless, and that I had good reasons for believing that they would do nothing of the kind; but, after repeated solicitations, I went to them to see if I could induce them to take the step of answering a letter from Mirabeau asking for explanations. I could not induce either of them to do this or let their names be quoted, nor did they wish it to be suspected that they were concerned in influencing the debates of the Assembly.

I should not have mentioned this circumstance if it had not been to observe that this character of reserve is a national trait, and that the fear of putting themselves forward in any matter not concerning them, and the suspicion even of an intrigue or a gratuitous intervention in foreign affairs is as common a sentiment among the English as the desire to put themselves forward and meddle with everything is a universal sentiment among the French.

CHAPTER XI

MIRABEAU AND THE COURT

DURING the month of November, Duroverai went to England; his absence, which was only to have been for eight days, was extended to four or five weeks. While he was absent Mirabeau came to see me one morning and told me he had a most important communication to make to me; he began in his usual way by representing in the most gloomy colours the complete disorganisation of the kingdom, and the impossibility of doing any good with the materials of which the Assembly was composed. I waited anxiously to discover to what this exordium, which was in the usual language of the anti-revolutionists, should lead. He brought out of his portfolio seven or eight pages in his handwriting, and said to me, "Here is a plan which may still save France, and at the same time secure her freedom; for you know me too well, my dear friend, to think that I should enter into any project of which Liberty is not the corner stone. Read it to the end without interruption, and afterwards I will tell you the means I propose to take to get it adopted; you will see that they correspond in importance to the measure itself. I cannot, however, tell

you any more at present, nor give you the names of the principal people concerned, it is a point of honour to keep it secret."

It is at this point that I most regret my imperfect memory, and the lapse of time which has effaced the greater part of the details of this plan. The basis of it all was to be the departure of the King, who could no longer endure his restraint in Paris; he was to proceed to Metz, or some other fortress where there would be generals who would be able to answer for the loyalty of their regiments, and, as soon as he arrived at his destination, he was to issue a proclamation, an appeal to the whole country, in which he would set forth the benefits that had been conferred by him on the capital, and the crimes committed by its inhabitants in return for them. He was to declare all the laws passed by the National Assembly to be null and void, as they had been framed by usurpers of the royal power and were contrary to precedent. He was then to dissolve the Assembly and to convoke the *bailleges* in order to name fresh members. At the same time he was to order all commanding officers to maintain their authority, and the *parlements* were to regain their power and treat all rebels with the greatest severity; he was to rally round him all the nobles and call upon them to defend the throne. Mirabeau was to stay in Paris and watch over the movements of the Assembly. At the moment of the issuing of this proclamation, all the Right and the moderate part of the Left were to agree to repair immediately to the presence of the King,

and to separate themselves from all those who refused to act in concert with him; it was to be the moment of complete scission. If Paris persevered in her disobedience, all communications were to be cut, and she would be reduced by starvation; it was certain that all the clergy who had been despoiled of their goods by the National Assembly would employ their religious influence on the minds of the people, and the bishops were to join together to protest in the name of religion against the sacrilegious usurpations of the Assembly. There were four or five pages about details of this kind; it seemed to me that it was all very cleverly arranged, and that the different parts of the plan worked well together.

I cannot express what my emotion, or rather my terror, was at listening to this. After a few moments' silence, I said to Mirabeau, that I was grateful for his friendship in giving me his confidence, that I had no remark to make on it, that such grave events were past my understanding, that I was not competent to judge of the fate of the monarchy, or to pronounce between the King and the Assembly; but that, for my part, I was resolved not to spend another day in Paris, and should immediately prepare for my departure.

The sound of this conversation still lingers in my memory: we spoke slowly and in low tones, as men do who weigh each word, and who, in order to contain their hidden emotion, restrain every movement of their body for fear of any sudden explosion.

"You make a great mistake," said Mirabeau, astonished

at my resolution, "you think that this plan will be the signal for civil war, but you do not know how much the whole of France is still attached to the King, and how essentially monarchical we are. The moment the King is free, the Assembly will be reduced to nothing; with him it is a colossus, but without him it is only a mountain of sand. There will be some agitation at the Palais Royal. If Lafayette wishes to be a second Washington and puts himself at the head of the National Guard, he deserves to perish, and his fate will soon be decided."

"Yes," said I, interrupting him, "and that of many others as well; murder will preside over massacre! I do not know what will be your means of carrying your plan into execution, but I am sure they must be radically wrong, because the King has not enough strength of character to go through with it. He will ruin the scheme as he has done so many others."

"You do not know the Queen," he said, "she has great strength of mind, and the courage of a man."

"And have you seen her?" I said, "Have you been consulted? Are you sure they trust you? Consider with whom you are going to act, with what men you will be connected. Suppose you find yourself at Metz, or any other such place, you may be sure that if this plan succeeds at the outset you will be the first person that they will throw over, for you have proved yourself formidable, and that they will never forgive. But, leaving out all personal considerations, has not everything that has hitherto been attempted against

the Assembly worked in its favour? Is it not backed up by public opinion? Has it not paralyzed the State, finances, and the army? The King will be on the frontier, he will have the Emperor's help, but is it in his nature to become the conqueror of his people? Would it be possible to establish Liberty by Austrian troops? and would it not be an outrage to inaugurate the regeneration of France by this greatest of all evils?"

I recollect that, getting by degrees excited by the conversation, I was no longer on my guard, and my voice was raised, and after a sudden outburst we were both surprised no longer to hear the sound of a violin, to which we had paid little attention and which was being played in a room only separated from our own by a thin partition.

"We might be overheard," said Mirabeau, "let us go into another room." "I have also thought out," he said, "some of the objections you make, but I am sure that the Court is determined to make this attempt, and I think it is of importance that I should be associated with it in order to ensure its success and lead it into the paths of freedom, rather than that fresh mistakes should arise and accomplish its ruin. If it fails, then there is an end to the monarchy?"

"And how can a man of good sense," I replied, "gamble in such an infernal lottery? You are sore because the National Assembly has passed the decree excluding you from the Government, you are not aware how far your resentment is leading you astray. If others than yourself had formed this scheme, you would have looked on it as

a monstrous crime or a mad piece of folly. I agree with you that the Assembly is very badly led, but I am persuaded that if seven or eight persons would work together, there is no good which might not come of it. If you have any influence at Court, which, however, I doubt, use it to give them this advice, to work with the Assembly and not outside it. All these pseudo plans and counter-revolutionary whims only keep up the general disquiet, and provide the Jacobins and the Comité de Surveillance with endless alarms. Finally, it is in the Assembly that you are trusted and have power; except there, you have none, and if the Court intrusts itself to you it will be easier to serve it as a member of the Assembly than as a Minister."

This is the general purport of our conversation, as I remember it, which lasted two or three hours. I succeeded in shaking Mirabeau's determination, and, little by little, he confessed to me that he had only proposed this scheme after he had been sounded to see if he could be depended on if the King thought fit to leave the capital. I easily made him see that it was only a hypothetical project thrown out by the Court, that, as he was not in close touch with the Tuileries, there were no facts to go upon, and that there was a great deal of difference between suggesting a scheme and being a member of the council that should decide on its adoption. This consideration had great weight with him; he felt he was only being employed as an accessory, and he had not even been informed of the names of the principal persons who had planned the means of escape; he could

not answer for the King's consent to this plan, or for his determination to abide by the consequences of it. The result was that he gave me his word of honour to back out of it altogether, and to persuade "Monsieur," for it was he who was supposed to be the originator of the plot, to give it up and to persuade the Court to direct all its attention to the National Assembly. Two or three days afterwards, Mirabeau told me that not only had he abandoned his part in the scheme, but that the Court itself had given it up, that the King, always irresolute, leant towards flight when he was driven to extremities by some new attack of the Assembly, but that as soon as it let him alone for a time, he would no longer hear of the idea. The system that was therefore adopted was to form a united party of those of moderate opinions, and Mirabeau was looked on as necessary for the execution of this plan. A few days afterwards at a dinner given by the Bishop of Chartres, Brissot said to me in a triumphant tone: "Well, you are always laughing at our Comité de Surveillance, and our discoveries of conspiracies, but this time you'll laugh no longer. We hold all the threads of a plot and we have the names of some very great people, we have all the proofs; I can't tell you any more at present, but to-morrow you will hear what it 's all about."

The next day, the Committee lodged information against the Marquis de Favras, who was in Monsieur's household, and gave very strong evidence of a plan to carry off the King and convey him to some town on the frontier. I know that Monsieur was in a great fright; he thought himself

obliged to go to the Paris Commune to disavow any connection with the Marquis de Favras; he wrote a letter to the Assembly of which Mirabeau confessed to me he was the author. The storm was quelled. Favras, a ruined gambler, belonged to a class of adventurers whose friends always throw them over if they expose themselves to detection. His conduct in the trial was as calm as that of the public was frantic. If he was one of Monsieur's spies, at all events he was faithful to him to the last, and he mounted the scaffold with a courage that would have done honour to a more respectable life than his. The secret of the intrigue was never known, but I have no doubt that he was one of those men who are only useful as the instruments of others, but whose vanity and ambition lead them to undertake work beyond their powers, and by being too active are themselves the cause of everything being discovered. This sad tragedy must have made the Court party feel the necessity of using all its powers to conciliate one party in the Assembly. As for Mirabeau, he freely cursed these blundering courtiers and mountebank conspirators who wished to re-establish the monarchy by means of a ruined gambler; but the praises he bestowed on Favras' courage and coolness during his final cross-examination made me suspect that his death had calmed the fears of his friends as much as those of his enemies.

I must not forget the part taken by Mirabeau in the question of the property of the Church. Turgot, in his article in the Encyclopaedia entitled "Endowments," had

shown that the legislators had always the right to destroy the powers of corporations when they appeared to be hurtful to the public welfare. He had shown the absurdity of believing that an endowment, that is to say, the private wishes of an individual, could be considered as an immutable law. It followed from this that the clergy being a body of public servants, their properties were really only to be considered as their salaries; and as long as they were looked upon as necessary to the State, they must be paid; but the State had the right to assign their pay to them out of the public revenues, as in the case of the army, or out of appropriated funds such as lands or tithes. The whole question turned on whether their landed estates ought to be left to them, or whether they ought to be salaried like other officials. The Bishop of Autun was the first who proposed to sell the property of the Church to pay off the National Debt, and to substitute for it a fixed revenue or income. Mirabeau had adopted the same opinion, which was that of the Left, and the popular party. There were two motives for this, one the immense inheritance of the Clergy which it was proposed to seize, and the reduction of which appeared to be a necessity in a democratic constitution. A powerful Church is a redoubtable weapon in the hands of a King. The clerical cause was vigorously defended by the Abbé Maury, the Archbishop of Aix and many others.

I did not interfere in this discussion and wrote no speech for Mirabeau. I had my own opinion on the subject, which was that one has no right to sacrifice victims for the public

welfare, and that it was unjust to despoil the clergy in order to pay the National debt. The abolition of convents, if accomplished with consideration, would be a humane and wise measure; the reduction in the future of the salaries of ecclesiastics would have been compatible with justice and prudence; but it seemed to me essential not to diminish by a farthing the property of the actual possessors, and I even disputed on this point with the incumbents themselves; for example, the Abbé Morellet, who would have consented to some sacrifices and approved of proportional reductions in the case of prelates and high dignitaries. In England I had imbibed the principle, which is there held sacred, that no reform should be accomplished at the expense of living people, but in France no one thought anything of this rule. The old Government had never considered it and, in the case of the Jesuits, it had been violated. Even M. Necker had not observed it; he never ceased retrenching, economizing and reducing expenses, without troubling himself about the interests of despoiled individuals: if they were left with the mere necessaries of life, it was supposed to be a merciful act. The inflexible Camus, with his Jansenist hardness, treated the poor State Pensioners in a most despotic way, and because in taking away their pensions he did not pocket the proceeds himself, he passed for a most virtuous defender of the interests of the people, a rigid Cato, who made thousands miserable without making one individual happy; for the pensioners sustained a loss which threatened their very existence, while the public gain was an imperceptible

one, divided as it was amongst the mass of the Nation. What sort of reformers are they who only sacrifice one set of men to benefit others?

At this period one would have thought that the clergy were not included as part of the French nation. The National Assembly did not, however, carry its prejudices to this length, and proposed to give them a sufficiency; this they would have borne without a murmur if the treatment promised them had been carried out; but their property was taken from them, and the payment made in its place was not discharged for a long time.

The man who wrote Mirabeau's speeches on this subject was called Pélin; he was a native of Marseilles, an attorney or barrister, who in his youth had been concerned in some rather low affairs, and had either been convicted of these or escaped from justice—in any case his reputation was tarnished. He had been useful to Mirabeau at the time of his stormy election at Marseilles, and he had come to Paris about the month of October with a young and very pretty wife, knowing well, no doubt, whether or no there was danger for her in the austere surroundings of the people's tribune. Pélin appeared to be gentle and shy, he was reserved and discreet, not brilliant, but capable. He effaced himself in the company of Mirabeau, who treated him as a subordinate, and often spoke to him in a tone that surprised me, for Pélin was useful to him, and had made reports on Marseilles and other matters for him. He was paid insufficiently, he complained, for his services. Mirabeau held him

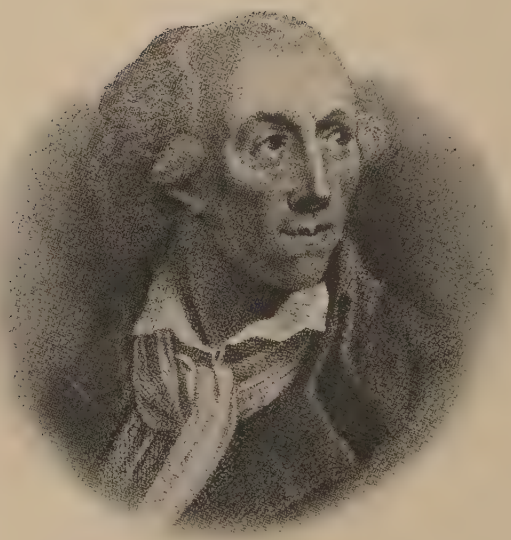
in contempt, though he recognized his talents and wished to employ them. One of Pélin's speeches on Church property reminds me of a scene which, by chance, I witnessed. I had not heard the speech which Maury answered and refuted with great success. Mirabeau was not really capable of following the Abbé in all the details and byways of a question of this sort, and he had asked to be allowed to wait till the next day to answer him. When he arrived home, he asked for Pélin, who could not be found; he sent two or three messages, but no one knew where he was. Towards evening, Mirabeau's anxiety became great; he sent off fresh messengers, and at last Pélin arrived; as I saw that the great man was in a rage and that his outbreak would be humiliating before a third person, I retired to a neighbouring room with a glass door, which I shut, but, nevertheless, I did not lose a word of the storm which burst on poor Pélin.

"Were you in the Assembly?" "No." "Why were you not there? Is that the way you conduct my affairs? See what a mess you have got me into! Maury spoke for an hour, and how will you be able to make a reply to a speech which you haven't heard? I know you, you would probably prefer to write one against me, but I insist on having a complete refutation by to-morrow morning; you will find in the evening reports a few extracts from his speech."

Pélin made some difficulty about it, and proposed an adjournment; the question might be postponed, after all, etc., etc. Mirabeau took him by the throat, pushed him

against the wall, and told him that he would have his way, and that he had better take care how he behaved. Pélin went to work about seven in the evening, and the next morning at seven o'clock, I received from Mirabeau a sheaf of papers and a note begging me to glance over Pélin's nocturnal production, to give it my particular attention from beginning to end, and to send it to him at the Assembly by midday. I sat down to read this speech, and was astonished at the flow of ideas, the force of the arguments and the chain of logic that connected it together. Pélin had neither imagination nor eloquence, his style was that of an ordinary advocate who argues a question without exaggerations. Mirabeau, less appreciative of this quality than of the one in which Pélin was lacking, did not do him justice. I sent him back the papers, and assured him that he could deliver the speech without compromising himself. Eventually, the question was adjourned, and the speech only appeared in the "Courrier de Provence."

Mirabeau has told me since, that Pélin was so covetous, that he wrote on more than one occasion for both sides, and that it was an amusement for him, as well as a source of income.



CLAVIÈRE

CHAPTER XII

LIFE IN THE CHAUSÉE-D'ANTIN.

MIRABEAU had left his hotel and now lodged in a house in the Chaussée-d'Antin, which he had furnished like a boudoir of a lady of fashion. He had never been able to indulge his taste for luxury in the straitened circumstances in which he had lived, but he liked pleasure, display, pretty furniture, delicate living, and numerous guests, and there would have been no harm in this if he had kept within his means. He inherited the title of "Marquis" from his father, but he would not assume it, as he thought he had attained more renown under his own name. He had also succeeded to a considerable estate which, however, was heavily charged with debt and mortgages. He confided to me that offers had been made to him to get him out of these difficulties and to set him again in possession of his property. The source of this offer would have made a proud and independent man suspicious; for it was "Monsieur" who undertook to pay him twenty thousand francs a month till his debts should be paid off, and thus to become his sole creditor. This at least was the specious turning which was given to what was called a

Court pension; it was the Duc de Lévis, a gentleman attached to "Monsieur's" household since his childhood, who had made this suggestion. Mirabeau never thought of paying his debts, except the most pressing ones, and probably it was not expected that he should do so, but as the Court had apparently abandoned the counter revolutionary plan, which involved the escape of the King, they were now attempting to form a party in the Assembly, and it was necessary to furnish Mirabeau with the means of keeping open house and a well-found table as a way of attracting men who would be useful to him. On the other hand, his expensive way of living might raise suspicions as to the source of his income, and for the "people's tribune" to live as a Lucullus could not fail to cause remark. The pension of twenty thousand francs was not paid for very long; Mirabeau did not prove sufficiently tractable, he did not consult the Court, nor show it the consideration expected of him, and on his side he treated with the greatest contempt those who, according to him, wished to render him impotent, by causing him to lose his popularity, and thus deprive him of his means of success.

The Court had at this time made another convert in the person of Prince Louis d'Aremberg, who was devoted to the Queen, and who saw more clearly than the other courtiers the great mistake that had been made in neglecting to use all possible means of influence and suggestion within the Assembly itself.

Mirabeau had presented me to him as well as Duroverai

and Clavière. The interviews of which I was a witness, and which were only on public matters, turned chiefly on the necessity of opposing the unbridled license of the press by wise and moderate writing, to prevent any excesses being committed under the name of liberty which could not fail to be fatal to it, to persuade the nation that the King had gone with good faith into the cause of the Revolution, and to combat the continual defiance shown against every measure proposed by the Government. It is certain that at this time all wise or honest men in France ought to have espoused the King's cause, since he had bound himself, either from a feeling of honour or else from weakness, or more probably still, because he feared civil war, to act in concert with the National Assembly, and nothing could move him from this resolution except the most violent behaviour and attacks made against what remained of monarchical power. Mirabeau, who understood the art of causing his friends to be appreciated as well as to make himself valued by them, and who had a sort of generous pride in showing them off to the best advantage, had no difficulty in securing our most zealous services to support his efforts against the cause of anarchy. Clavière foresaw in this intimacy a means by which he might be able to enter the government.

It must not be imagined, however, that the inner circle of our society was always a peaceful one. I never quarrelled with any of them, because I had no personal feelings concerned, and was quite independent; I had rendered them

some services and received none from them in return; I was often obliged to reconcile them to each other and to calm them, but once I thought there would be a rupture. We had been dining with Prince Louis d'Aremberg, and at dessert he had been sent for by the Queen; but his absence was not to be a long one, so we were to await his return. There had been some altercation in the morning, and their bad temper was only waiting for an excuse to explode. Mirabeau was playing with one of his rings, which Clavière looked at maliciously, saying,

"Is it a sphinx?"

"No," said Mirabeau, "it 's a very fine head of Cicero, and on this side is a Minerva, which is much admired."

"Exactly so," said Clavière. "Cicero on one side, Minerva on the other, and Demosthenes, I suppose, in the middle."

"As for you," said Mirabeau, not appreciating the joke, "if you have yourself painted as Minerva, mind you don't forget the owl."

"I am not particularly quick, I allow, my dear Count, but your ideas of humour are not mine."

"Oh! if you have not my ideas, you have your own. Don't you know the Bourges libels about me? Have you not seen Brissot's little essays? What about Madame le Jay's shop, where, as I understand, you go to discuss my reputation and bandy remarks about my living on my friends' money and talents, saying, that if I was reduced to my own resources there would soon be an end of me?"

After this the storm broke, violent reproaches succeeded

one another in quick succession; accusations of treachery and offensive remarks on each other's character were freely made, and their anger became so uncontrolled, that they could no longer moderate their voices, and the *maître d'hôtel*, hearing the noise in the next room, and driven more perhaps by curiosity than by any other motive, opened the door and asked if they had called him. Mirabeau replied at once with the greatest coolness, and thanked him most politely, but said that if they wanted anything they would ring. Duroverai joined with Clavière and reproached Mirabeau sharply for his conduct, and pointed out to him that in consequence of his inconsistency and sulkiness it was excessively difficult to act in concert with him. Soon the scene became nothing but confusion and noise, bitter reproaches and mutual accusations were launched at each other. Mirabeau and Clavière, both much affected, were often compelled to wipe their eyes, but the tears were certainly not those of affection. As I did not engage in this dispute, except by occasionally putting in a few words for the purpose of calming it, Duroverai made a direct appeal to me, and bade me say if I had not often found fault with Mirabeau's vagaries, and if I did not agree with them on all points in this quarrel. Mirabeau, who was perhaps planning a reconciliation, told them that if I had blamed him it was always openly, and to his face, and in a friendly way, but that I had not taken part, like them, in secret intrigues, and that I had never undermined his reputation by representing him as a plagiarist. When I thought my turn had

come, I told them simply that such disputes could have but one issue, and that they could not occur twice between men of their character; that if they wished to break off their intimacy with me, I should be deeply grieved, but that my choice was made, and that Mirabeau could not blame me for not separating myself at once from my earliest friends and compatriots; but that they would all repent of this rupture, which was only caused by bad temper, which they might forgive, or exaggerated reports circulated by unscrupulous people. "There is no question of controversy," I said. "It would be best to make an end of all this; you met together here with one object in common, and what new discovery have you made since the beginning of dinner which obliges you to part company? It is rather ridiculous that you should all have been friends at three o'clock if you are enemies now." By degrees the conversation took a more general turn, and we ended by all getting into the same carriage, where we discussed what measures were to be taken about procedure in the Assembly.

During this dispute, one curious part of it struck me very much; the two men were completely beside themselves, and yet, in spite of their fury, they were still careful to treat each other with consideration. I trembled every moment lest I should hear some reflections on Mirabeau's private affairs, or some insinuations about his pecuniary dealings issue from Clavière's lips, but he mastered himself, and Mirabeau, although foaming with rage and pride, was

still clever enough to mingle with his abuse expressions of esteem and even of praise of Clavière's talents, so that with the same hands he dealt out wounds and caresses. This is what made the reconciliation between them an easy matter, and it proves that if men are gentlemen, they may be trusted to lose their tempers without fatal results.

I remember one other legislative affair of importance in which I took part. Whilst reading the "Contrat Social" and "Observations sur la Pologne" I noticed that Rousseau ascribed the greatest importance to a graduated system of representation; that is to say, to make individuals in civil life pass through different ranks, as is the case in the army, so that one should be a stepping-stone to another. This has been practised in most republics without, however, having been enforced by law, excepting in the cases of Rome and Geneva, if one can quote in relation to each other two such incongruous names. It appeared to me that the same system ought to be adopted in France, and that it should be obligatory for a citizen to pass through municipal and departmental office before he could be eligible for election to the National Assembly, or that he should qualify for it by being employed in some public profession, such as that of barrister or judge. As the subordinate offices would only last for a couple of years, this would not cause too long a political apprenticeship, and would serve as a useful preparation for the handling of more important affairs. We discussed the question, and Mirabeau warmly embraced the scheme; I wrote a speech in which I embodied all my

knowledge of the subject, and I had the pleasure of seeing both the Right and Left sides unite in approbation of it, though something in it displeased the Lameths. Barnave and Duport asked for an adjournment; they suspected all sorts of aristocratical snares in this proposal, in spite of its being hallowed by the name of Rousseau, and their side was so certain of a docile majority in the Assembly that the keenest admirers of the plan became cool towards it, and the adjournment was agreed to. This was again an occasion in which I regretted that Mirabeau only seized the surface of things, and never entered into the depths of a question, and had so little talent for parliamentary debate. He could not reply to Barnave, as he knew nothing of the question beyond what was in his speech, and he did not even remember enough of the arguments in that to reproduce them in an answer. The affair therefore came to nothing, but it had interested all thoughtful minds. Mallouet had taken up its defence, Roederer had estimated the number of eligible candidates already existing in France, besides those sitting in the municipalities and the departments; it was enormous. I had the pleasure of answering Barnave in the "Courrier de Provence," and I never wrote anything with greater pleasure. I refuted him completely, and all the more thoughtful members of the Assembly were convinced of the utility of the measure, and made Mirabeau promise to bring it forward on some more favourable opportunity. But as it could only be adopted after a certain number of years so as to be fair to all the aspiring members

who wished to stand at the approaching elections, its urgency was not great. It would, therefore, not have been of any use if it had been included in the Constitution. A few of my English friends had, after reading Mirabeau's speech on this graduated system, found fault with it as being a useless restraint on the elections, but they changed their opinions after they read the answer I wrote in the "Courrier de Provence" to Barnave's objections. The motion had one fault, but it was a fatal one, this was that the measure was to be postponed for ten years; this had been settled in order that a sufficient number of candidates should have time to pass through the subordinate offices. Instead of this they ought to have at once put a limit on the number of those eligible to stand, so that for the next Assembly only those members who had already served on the first one, or citizens who had been employed in the municipalities and departments could have been elected.

If this precaution had been taken the second Assembly would have been composed of men all interested in the maintenance of the Constitution.

CHAPTER XIII

MIRABEAU'S DEATH

I LEFT Paris the beginning of March. Several reasons decided me to take this step; the relations between Mirabeau and Duroverai had become very stormy, owing to the quarrels which had arisen through the dishonesty of Madame le Jay in connection with the "Courrier de Provence," of which she took all the profits. I was much disappointed in my hopes for the regeneration and future welfare of the country and people, not that I did not believe that the National Assembly might still establish a constitution, but I had watched its proceedings too closely, the charm had vanished, my curiosity was satisfied, and I had no illusions left. Duroverai left too much of the work to me, I was weary of it, particularly when it consisted of disputes about money and intrigues connected with the bookshop. Mirabeau, to whom I was still personally attached, and whose charm lay in his genius, his influence, and his engaging and affectionate manners towards me, no longer inspired me with the same feelings of respect since I had known him more intimately. He had good intentions in general, but was carried away by his passions; he was

attached to the King, and wished to serve the cause of monarchy whenever it was in danger of being attacked by the Jacobins, but his motives were not pure, and his ostentatious surroundings, which were provided for from a very doubtful source, gradually made me withdraw from his house and company. What finally decided me on this step was that in several publications my name had been associated with his; Pelletier's pamphlet, entitled "Domine salvum fac regem," was the first in which it thus appeared. In it Mirabeau was despoiled of his literary reputation, the addresses were attributed to Duroverai, and the "Courrier de Provence" to me. Descriptions of us appeared in numerous libellous publications. I had some satisfaction in the recognition of my work by a small society, but I felt great disgust at being given this publicity. There was nothing to be proud of in achieving a reputation as a working subordinate; my feelings were offended at the supposition that I had influential intimacy with a man whose reputation was not above reproach. Instead of giving me the credit for the good I had been able to accomplish, and for the harm I had tried to prevent, it was natural to attribute to me the very excesses that I had been the first to condemn. I noticed some most estimable people becoming distant in their manner towards me in consequence of the contempt they felt for Mirabeau. I had always kept up my intimacy with my earliest acquaintances in Paris, and I was grieved to see that party spirit had alienated me from some of them. My friends in London wrote to me to advise me to return,

because my association with Mirabeau made me dangerously notorious owing to the prejudice which began to be felt against the revolutionary party. I left, therefore, and all the little suspicious remarks, the little suggestive questions which were circulated among the circle of my acquaintance vanished at my return.

I will here say a few words about people with whom I was more or less acquainted, as a memorandum for myself which may help me, later on, to recollect interesting facts, for one often accidentally finds things one has lost whilst searching for others.

I often dined with Barrère de Vieuzac; we met at a table-d'hôte at Versailles which was frequented by several deputies. I thought him amiable and gentle; he had good manners, and he seemed only to be a revolutionist from sentiments of benevolence. I am convinced that his association with Robespierre, and with others whom he in turn flattered and deserted, was not the result of a bad nature, but arose from his timidity and weak versatility, and also from vanity, which made him wish to play a great rôle. His talents, which were solely oratorical, were mediocre; there were fifty others in the Assembly who were superior to him. He has been called the "Anacreon of the guillotine," but when I knew him he was only the Anacreon of the revolution, on which he wrote pretty little lovers' phrases which appeared in his paper, the "Point du Jour."

Barnave lodged in a house in Versailles in which we occupied the ground floor after we left the Hôtel Charost.

I could never have been intimate with him, even if he had not belonged to the Lameth faction, Mirabeau's enemies. He was proud and irritable, had a jealous and choleric temper, and was conceited to a revolting degree; but after a little practice he showed much ability in debate, though at first he was tiresomely prolix. He was a man whose character ripened and developed rapidly. His jealousy of his brother deputy, Mounier, was as much a cause of their separation as were his revolutionary principles. Mirabeau said of him, "He is a tree that only grows in order some day to become a ship's mast."

I also saw Pétion very often, never guessing the part he was to play later on. He had the corpulence of an indolent man and an appearance of respectability, but he was vain and thought himself a great orator, because, like Barnave, he spoke extempore, but his speeches showed no talent nor powers of thought or expression.

I knew Target the preceding year, but he became so important after his election to the Assembly that I was too insignificant a person for him even to perceive; so, after having borne his bombastic airs once or twice, I gave up going to his house. It was said of him that he was drowned in his talents and choked by his bombast. I took a slight revenge for his contempt of me by making a few humorous remarks in Mirabeau's paper, but it required more than this to prick the eloquence of this windbag.

I often dined at Versailles with Mallouet, but we did not see him when we went to Paris, as he was carried off into

another vortex. He impressed me as an amiable man of quiet manners and moderate sentiments. He was awkward in the Assembly, of which he had not caught the tone; his remarks were never to the point; he often stumbled on a word that was most offensive to the Assembly, and lost control of himself over a trifle, but he had intellect, strength of character and also experience. His book on the exportation of negroes was not in his favour.

Volney, a large, dull, bilious man, showered fulsome flattery on Mirabeau. He had the dry humour of exaggeration, but he was not a working member of the Assembly. One day it was proposed to impose silence on the occupants of the galleries: "Why should we do that?" he said, "those who sit there are our masters, we are only their workmen; they have the right to censure or applaud us as they like."

I had only two conversations with Robespierre: he had a sinister appearance and never looked anyone in the face; he had a nervous twitch in his eyes that was continuous and painful. Once when there was a question relating to Genevese affairs, he asked me for some explanations, and I pressed him to speak on the subject. He told me that he was as shy as a child, that he always shook with fear on approaching the Tribune, and that he was hardly conscious of his surroundings when he began to speak.

I sometimes saw the Abbé Morellet, who was already violently opposed to the Assembly; he would, however, have forgiven its democracy if it had respected, not so much the Church itself, which he had never held to be of any

account, but the property of the Church, his share of which had reached him too late and which it was hard for him to lose so soon. As he had been one of the first promoters of the cause of liberty, he was told by Lord Lansdowne that he ought to look upon himself as a wounded soldier in a victorious army. But the victory, if it was one, did not console him for his loss. At his house I met Marmontel, who spoke of the philosophers and what they did to destroy the prejudices and errors into which their exaggerated ideas led them. All they hoped for was very different from what was accomplished. Marmontel, who was one of the discontented number, said: "The National Assembly reminds me of what was said by Madame de Sévigné: 'I should admire Provence very much if there were no Provençaux.'"

I sometimes saw M. Necker, but always officially and in reference to our Genevese affairs. I even had a correspondence with him, and I have some anecdotes on this subject which I will return to later.

Champfort was often with Mirabeau; he sometimes helped him with his literary work, but he always infected him with his own violence and spite. We remarked that, after seeing Champfort, he became more exaggerated and bitter. Champfort, not being able to overturn the state, wrote a speech for Mirabeau against all academies and the French Academy in particular. It had become the object of his satires; to attain only to despise was a refinement of scorn.[1]

[1] His éloges of Molière and Fontenelle procured him prizes from the French Academy.

Towards the end of 1790, I went to stay for six months in Geneva to see my mother and sisters who had returned to their native land. On my way, I stayed three weeks in Paris. I travelled with Achille Duchâtelet, whose acquaintance I had made in London; he had served in America, and there embraced republican ideas: at the outbreak of the French Revolution, he adopted the popular side, and his convictions were much strengthened by his intimacy with Condorcet. His ambition was solely a military one; his character appeared to me to be frank, loyal and generous; he was well informed, and had much readiness and good taste. He was one of the most amiable men I ever met, but he had the lightness and impetuosity of a young Frenchman who had received a fashionable education and whose birth dispensed with the necessity of knowing too much; if his character had been formed in England, he would have had more power and depth of thought, but his good qualities were his own and his frivolous ones resulted from the school in which he was brought up. He found England a more moral country than his own, and he was struck by it, and in finding there a less superstitious religion he was converted from the prejudices he had formerly held against every form of religion. We had several serious conversations on this subject, and my principles, graver than his own, served to strengthen our new friendship. He was a great admirer of Mirabeau, who was often the subject of our conversation as he then was of the whole of France as well as of Europe, for he was the leading character in the Assembly and

dominated everything. Strangers always looked for him first, they were delighted if they heard him speak, and his most ordinary remarks were converted into apothegms. We even found that the postilions had a curious way of expressing their admiration for him; "You have very bad horses," we said to a postboy between Calais and Amiens. —"Yes," he said, "the two in the shafts are bad, but my 'mirabeau' is a good one." This was the third horse, which was in the middle and which was commonly called the "mirabeau"; it was the one that did most of the work, and as long as the "mirabeau" was good, they did not trouble about the others. Duchâtelet was aware of the fact that at Paris I passed as the author of several of the great man's speeches: he sounded me discreetly as to this, but I said nothing to confirm his suspicions. Trying to extract some information from me, he said: "He must be the author of his written speeches, for they are exactly the same as his spoken ones; they have the same style, the same principles; I suppose he gets the materials for them provided by other people, but he must put them together himself. You, who know him so well, what do you think about it?" "I think," I said, "that people are pleased to belittle the reputation of a celebrated man. There is nothing so easy as to make these imputations, and nothing so difficult as to refute them. But what does it matter, supposing he does make his friends help him? If he knows how to make them produce what they never could do without his instigation, he is in reality the author of them. This sort of talent is not

possessed by everyone; why should he be the only man who knows how to utilize the talents of others? Why should not other people use the same resources?" It was thus that I eluded his questions without in any way deceiving him. But it was Mirabeau himself who revealed the secret as to our relations, by his usual indiscretion. As soon as I saw him again, he took me into his confidence. Not only was he still maintaining his reputation, but he had become more powerful in the Assembly; he had not precisely a party of his own, but he had great influence over both parties, and they had to reckon with him as with a superior power. The Jacobin cavillers who then formed a party in the state and almost rivalled the Assembly itself, although they were alternatively governed by the Lameths, Robespierre and Pétion, almost always allowed themselves to be persuaded by Mirabeau whenever he condescended to speak from their tribune; but he did this rarely and he was as contemptuous as he was jealous of this dangerous faction.

He told me that he had seen the Queen, had given her advice, and that he was full of hope that his relations with the Court would have good results. He thought the Royal Family felt the necessity of attaching themselves to him, and he hoped he might persuade them to listen no longer to the imprudent counsels of the emigrants and foreign princes.

He had to report, at this time, in the name of the diplomatic committee, on the relative dispositions of foreign powers towards France. This matter greatly interested the

Court. In other hands this report might become a firebrand with which to kindle a war, in any case it would be likely to excite distrust; but he wished to make it a means of conciliation, and hoped by means of it to allay the alarming rumours spread by the Jacobins against the Houses of Spain and Austria; and he concluded by bidding the executive power take necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the kingdom. He begged me to compose the part of this report which related to England, and not to forget anything that might tend to the union of the two powers, also to attack vehemently Burke's book against the Revolution, because he wished to give a democratic colour to his discourse in order to ensure the success of its conclusions with the governing power. I very willingly took charge of this part of the work, as nothing was more agreeable to me than to profit by such a good occasion for combating the prejudices that had been formed against England, and for maintaining a good feeling between the two nations. I had found so many exaggerations in Burke's book, that I had no scruples in making it appear as a mere declamation expressing nothing resembling the sentiments of the English. I wrote two or three pages in this sense, and the next day, when the statement was to be presented, Mirabeau came to fetch me, and not being able to contain his impatience, he read the whole speech to us, except the part relating to England, which I had not given him. Duchâtelet and I went to the Assembly together. The speech was very well received, especially the part relating to Burke and England

because everyone was sincerely anxious to be at peace with Great Britain, and they coveted the good opinion of the English. Duchâtelet said nothing to me, but in the evening he said to Madame Condorcet before me, "This man is one of those who prefers to hide what he does, rather than to boast of what he does not accomplish."

On being introduced into society, I at once received a welcome such as the French alone can give. The reserve which I had observed with Duchâtelet had the reward which modesty always produces by the hundredfold, and he attributed much more to me than I ever did or could possibly do. During these weeks, I lived in a constant vortex; I dined several times with Mirabeau, whose way of living was more brilliant than ever, and whose house had been redecorated. He found himself in the midst of riches to which he had not been accustomed, and which he did not use with discretion. After dinner, I was surprised to see him display a casket containing many precious stones; this was proclaiming himself on the Civil List, and I was surprised that his popularity suffered no harm from it. He had bought a part of Buffon's library, which, though not a numerous collection, was very valuable and rare. His table was splendid, and his guests numerous. The house was full from an early hour; there was a continual levee from seven in the morning to the time when he went to the Assembly; there was often a crowd waiting at the door for the pleasure of seeing him pass out. Though titles had been abolished, his had always continued; he was still the "Comte de"

Mirabeau not only to his servants and visitors, but to the people, who love to adorn their idols. Astonished with all this display, I said one day to Clavière, "Mirabeau is badly advised; one would think he was afraid of passing for an honest man." "He is necessary to us," he answered; "he alone is feared by both the Jacobins and the Court, and supposing he cost the nation a million of money, he would be well worth it."

If I had liked I could have discovered many of his secrets, intrigues and intentions, for he was disposed to be very open with me, but I did not wish to play the part either of censor or of flatterer. He knew well what was passing in my mind, and tried to convince me in twenty different ways that his sole object was, if possible, to save the monarchy; that for this purpose he must have means; that a petty morality was the enemy of a wider one; that disinterested services were rare; that heretofore the Court had wasted money without sense or results, and that it had only bought traitors.

I recollect a scandalous story about the Abbé Lamoureth, afterwards Bishop of Lyons. It was at a dinner party, where were assembled Garat, Volney, Cabanis, Palissot and several others. Lamoureth was the author of Mirabeau's speeches on the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, and Mirabeau appeared to me not to have the same opinions in private that he had advanced in public; for he wished to have a catholic clergy, though he did not wish them to be powerful or exclusive. Palissot spoke of the Abbé

Gregoire, who appeared very zealous in the cause of his religion, and who, with the intolerance customary to his kind, accused Mirabeau of being a charlatan and an impostor. "As for that," said Lamoureth, "I have taught him theology, and can assure you he believes in God a hundred times more than is necessary."

"Take care," said Mirabeau, "there is a Genevese here whom you will shock, for he believes in God from the depths of his heart."

"So do I," said Lamoureth: "I should be very sorry if he misunderstands me."

After dinner, I opened a new book which was lying on the table, and the title attracted my attention; it was "Meditations of the Soul with its God," by the Abbé Lamoureth, Professor of Theology, etc.

Mirabeau was not satisfied with the part he took in the Clergy Question. M. Bertrand in his annals, ascribes very profound views on the subject to him; he thought that in the plan Mirabeau drew up it was necessary that the Clergy should be opposed to the Assembly in order to give the King fresh allies. This, I think, is too subtle; I should rather suppose that he gave way in the matter to the opinion of the Revolutionists, though he did not confound their opinions with those of France in general.

During the last week that I was in Paris, I saw Mirabeau in a new rôle, and one that he appeared to despise, more from jealousy, however, than from indifference. He was made President of the Assembly. He had been formerly

rejected for this post, though it was given in turn to all the distinguished members and even to some who had no claim to that distinction. This was a proof that the Court party was beginning to perceive that it would be as well to treat him with consideration, for he had too many secret enemies on the democratic side to expect a majority from their votes alone. This place was never before so well filled; he showed in it fresh talents; he put order and precision into the work of which there was formerly no trace. He avoided all that was superfluous; with one word he would clear up a doubtful point or appease a tumult. His consideration for all sides, the respect with which he always treated the Assembly, the precision of his speeches, the answers to the different deputations which were sometimes prepared and sometimes improvised, but always given with grace and dignity, satisfied even those whose requests he refused, or to whom he was opposed. In short, his activity, his impartiality and his presence of mind added to his reputation and his brilliancy in a position which was the rock on which most of his predecessors had suffered shipwreck.

He had the art of always playing the principal rôle, and general attention was fixed on him, though as he could no longer speak from the Tribune, he seemed to be deprived of his greatest advantage. Some of his jealous enemies had elected him president in order to reduce him to silence, but they had the mortification of seeing him add another feather to his cap. All he needed was good health. "If," he said, "I believed in slow poisons, I should be convinced

that I was being murdered. I feel I am wasting away, and that a slow fire is consuming me."

I observed, that his style of living would probably, ere now, have killed any man less robust than himself. Not a moment of repose from seven in the morning till ten or eleven at night, continual conversations, agitations both of mind and of body, an imprudent diet, too good living, especially over-indulgence in sweet dishes, though he was moderate in the use of wine. "It would require the constitution of a salamander," I said, "to live in such a devouring furnace without being consumed."

At this time he contemplated retiring from public life, as do all statesmen and ambitious men in their moments of worry and anxiety. He had ophthalmia, caused by the heated condition of his blood; I saw him, at the time he was President, apply leeches, between the morning and afternoon sitting, and come to the Assembly with his neck wrapped up in linen to staunch the blood. When we took leave of each other, he embraced me with an emotion which I never saw in him before. "I shall die of all this, my dear friend," he said, "we shall perhaps never meet again. When I am no more, my worth will be recognized. The misfortunes which I have prevented will descend on France from all quarters; the factious criminals who tremble before me will no longer be held in check; I can only foresee disaster! Ah! my friend, how right we were when we tried at the beginning to prevent the Commons declaring themselves the National Assembly. That was the origin of all the

mischief; since they gained this victory, they have never ceased to show how unworthy they are of it. They wish to govern the King instead of governing through him, but very soon it will be neither they nor he who rules. A villainous faction will get the better of both, and France will be full of horrors."

I did not then suspect that these sad presentiments would be accomplished in every particular. I looked on them as the effects of his vivid imagination. I did not feel inclined to believe in the villainy of those whom he designated as the leaders of the Jacobins. I thought that his hatred of certain individuals carried him too far in exaggerating their faults, a fact of which I had often had experience before.

Three months afterwards, Mirabeau was no more.

CHAPTER XIV

PERSONAL TRAITS

I WAS not intimately acquainted with the details of Mirabeau's private life, and knew nothing of his domestic relations with either his parents or his wife. The strength of his passions from his youth upwards may have justified his father's harshness to him, but the Marquis de Mirabeau was as violent as his son, and never had the art of controlling his fiery nature; instead of appealing to his affections, which were very susceptible, he tried to subdue him by force, and this caused his revolt.

He said himself that his family was like that of Atreus and Thyestes, the divisions between the parents caused the formation of opposing parties amongst the children, and accustomed them to constraint and dissimulation. The vicious example set by them influenced Mirabeau's precocious nature only too easily. It had unfortunately been depraved by women long before his mind had reached maturity. His education easily explained the secret of all the curiously complicated and contradictory qualities in his character.

I have heard it said that in order to gain his wife he had

recourse to methods which show how little delicacy of feeling he possessed. Her parents had refused his proposals, and he was anxious to get rid of a dangerous rival; he therefore bribed one of the maidservants in the house to give him a rendezvous, and drove by night to a neighbouring street in order to give an air of mystery to his proceedings; here he left the carriage for several hours. His rival's spies soon brought back the news that the Comte de Mirabeau had a rendezvous in his mistress's house and had stayed there many hours. In this way the young lady's name was compromised, and the rival retired defeated. The parents were only too happy to hush up a scandal by consenting to the marriage. This union, which began by a love founded on fraud, was very soon dissolved owing to reciprocal infidelities, and they separated for ever.

His correspondence with Madame Mounier, written during his imprisonment in the Vincennes donjon, shows more sensuality than feeling; several of these letters are of such an offensive nature that they even tarnish the reputation of the recipient of them, for no man would have presumed to write in this manner to any woman for whom he felt the smallest esteem.

Garat made a study of these letters, and read his discoveries on the subject to us at M. de Talleyrand's house. It was a revelation of pillage and plagiarism. The lover, writing to his mistress, had copied entire pages out of contemporaneous writings.

"Listen to me, my Love, I am about to pour the deepest

recesses of my heart into yours," etc. These inmost confidential feelings were transcribed word for word, either from some article in the "Mercure de France," or from the pages of the latest novel.

During this time of solitude, while his imagination could only feed on itself, he composed another erotic book, which was merely a collection of all that was most impure amongst the authors of antiquity.

One is astonished to see that such a man as Mirabeau could emerge from the mire of such surroundings, but his habits though vicious were not debauched; he needed affection and tenderness. He told me once that he could never see the wretched victims of public vice without horror and mortification. He did not look on this as a merit, for he believed his guilt against society was greater than theirs. He was a man who inspired passion as strongly as he experienced it. In Holland he had attached himself to a charming lady who belonged to a respectable family, and who united herself to him as the result of a passion which carried her beyond all other considerations. She had never been married, was young, beautiful, and full of modesty and charm. She would have adorned a virtuous life and deserved every mark of affection; those who knew her well never forgave Mirabeau for having sacrificed this interesting woman for a vixen who took a pride in vice, and boasted of her immorality. But Madame le Jay was artificial, intriguing, and wicked, she was a flatterer and passionate; she took advantage of her power over Mirabeau to increase his natural

violence in order to serve her own ends. His friends were ashamed to see him under the influence of such a woman, whose bad character was not redeemed by any good qualities. Mirabeau was conscious of his own power, and this sustained him in situations which would most likely have degraded any other character.

His mind loved all that was noble, he thirsted for truth. He had naturally a good style which he cultivated by studying classical authors in several languages. He did not know much, but what he knew was always at his fingers' ends. In the vortex of his stormy life he had no time for study, but while he was imprisoned at Vincennes he read widely, also practised translating and made a collection of extracts and passages from celebrated authors.

His attainments were hardly equal to those of the ordinary man of letters, and he made no boast of his knowledge, but what was peculiar to him was, that he possessed a fervent and eager nature which when he was moved animated his whole countenance. Nothing was easier than to excite his imagination and emotion. From youth upwards he was accustomed to interest himself in all important questions relating to government and politics, but he was never able to enter profoundly into them; the art of discussion, of examination, of questioning was not his, there was too much heat and haste in his disposition for it to be possible for him to apply himself assiduously or methodically to any subject. His intellect moved by leaps and bounds, it was a vigorous and impetuous torrent. He abounded in salient expressions,

he even made a study of them. He was destined to be the chief ornament of the Assembly at the precise moment when audacity and strength were the qualities most needed.

If he is considered as an author, it must be conceded that his works without exception are pieces of patchwork, in which very little of his own writings remain after his collaborators' work is removed. But he had the quality of giving life to their efforts, of throwing into them vivid touches, original expressions and fiery and eloquent apostrophes. He had the ability, which is a rare one, of discovering the hidden talents of others. He gave to each of his subordinates the incitement which they most needed, he inspired them with his own zeal and made them eager to co-operate in a work of which he alone reaped the credit. He felt it quite impossible to write consecutively unless he was helped and guided by borrowed notes on the subject. His style was too exaggerated and very soon degenerated into bombast, and he became disgusted with the chaos and incoherence of his ideas. But when he had a foundation to work on he knew how to bring it all together, how to curtail it, and how to inspire it with life and eloquence. This is what he called putting the distinctive touch, or *trait.* This *trait* was a singular expression of his; it might be an image of thought, a witticism, an epigram, an irony, an allusion, anything in fact telling or original which he thought absolutely necessary to sustain the reader's interest. This mania for originality is a very dangerous one and may easily convert a good style into a decadent and affected one.

As a political orator Mirabeau's talents in some particulars were of the first order: he saw everything at a glance, possessed tact and the art of at once taking in the real feeling of the Assembly, and of using its whole strength in resistance without wasting it on unimportant details. No one ever created a greater effect with fewer words, no one ever came to the point with greater precision or was so successful in guiding public opinion either by some happy remark or by some palpable hit which got the better of his opponents.

While standing at the Tribune he was always calm; storms might rage round him, he remained unmoved and self-possessed. I remember hearing him read a report on the condition of Marseilles; every word was interrupted by insults from the right side. All round he heard the words "Calumniator," "Liar," "Assassin," "Villain," and such like gutter expressions. He stopped speaking and turning to the most violent of the rioters said in the sweetest tones: "I am waiting, gentlemen, till you have exhausted your amenities," and then he continued as quietly as if he had received the most favourable attention.

He was never provoked beyond the point of observing the decorum of oratory, but he lacked as a political orator the power of argument; he could not follow a consecutive course of reasoning to its conclusion, he did not understand how to refute arguments methodically, and was often reduced to abandoning his most important motions after having delivered his introductory speech, and in

spite of a brilliant entrance into action he often left the field to his adversaries. This fault arose from the quickness of his perceptions and his lack of reflection; he never took the trouble to foresee objections nor to discuss details. In this respect he was very inferior to the giants of the English parliament. Fox's greatest triumphs, for instance, were in his refutations. He used to take all the opinions contrary to his own and mould them into a new and more favorable light so as to give them greater force than they had before, thus placing himself in a more difficult position, and then he would set to and pulverise them one after another, and he never showed to greater advantage than when he was supposed to be vanquished. The only members of the National Assembly who had this talent for argument were Maury, Clermont-Tonnerre, Barnave and Thouret. Barnave in particular was well provided with logic and could follow step by step the reasonings of his antagonist, but he had no imaginative powers either of eloquence or of description. One day a comparison was made between his dull didactic methods and the oratorical talents of Mirabeau, and some one said: "How can you compare this artificially trained espalier with a natural tree growing in all its beauty in the face of every wind that blows?" Certainly these two men were not of the same stamp. Mirabeau recognized his weak point, and one day when he endeavoured to answer some arguments with very little success, he said to us, "I see that to speak well extempore one must begin by thoroughly mastering the subject beforehand."

Mirabeau had a full, sonorous, and manly voice. It was pleasant and satisfying to listen to and was always well sustained, and yet was flexible, and he was heard as well when he lowered his tone as when he raised it. All the notes of the scale were at his disposal, and the conclusions of his sentences were pronounced with so much care that it was impossible to miss a word of them.

His ordinary manner of speaking was rather slow; he began with some little embarrassment, often hesitated, but in a way that was interesting, as he appeared to be searching for the most suitable expression, to be choosing the most appropriate and apposite terms. When he had found them, he brought the big bellows of the forge into play, and put into force the whole armoury of his eloquence, but in his most impetuous moments the feeling which made him weigh his words prevented his being a rapid speaker, and he had the greatest contempt for the ordinary volubility and false excitability of the French, which he called "Operatic thunderstorms."

He never forgot the dignity that should belong to a senator, but at the beginning of his career his principal defect was that of pretension and a slight affectation of manner. He looked round him in a boastful way, and his contempt often bordered on insolence.

It was wonderful to see how he was able to read the little pencil notes that were brought to him while he was in the Tribune and at the same time proceed with his speech, and even introduce them into the body of his discourse

with apparently the greatest ease. Garat compared him to a conjuror who tears a piece of paper into twenty fragments, swallows them before everyone's eyes, and then produces them whole from his mouth.

He had a miraculous power of receptivity. A word that he heard casually, a fact in history, or an apt quotation became at once his own property. One day Barnave, who was very proud of his readiness, had just made an extempore reply to a prepared speech. Champfort, who was at the moment speaking to Mirabeau on the steps of the Tribune, observed that facility was an excellent talent to possess as long as it was not used. Mirabeau seized on this expression for his exordium, which began as follows: "I have always maintained that facility is one of Nature's greatest gifts, on condition of its never being employed, and what I have just heard does not make me feel inclined to change my opinion."

He considered that among his advantages were to be counted his robust and hearty appearance, his bulky figure, and his strongly-marked features, which were deeply pitted by the small pox. "Nobody knows," he said, "the power of my ugliness"; all the same he admired his so-called ugliness exceedingly. His dress was carefully attended to. He had very thick hair, which was artistically arranged so as to increase the size of his head. "When," he said, "I shake my shock head ('*terrible hure*'), no one dares to interrupt me."

He took great pleasure in looking at himself in the

glass, squaring his shoulders, and throwing back his head. He had a fad which many vain men possess, of liking to hear the sound of his own name; he even repeated it to himself, and amused himself by imagining dialogues in which he always named himself as interlocutor, "Le Comte de Mirabeau will now answer you," etc.

At first he did not possess the qualities requisite for a party leader. He liked to shine alone, to manage everything himself, and did not sufficiently consider the feelings of others. He had no general principles, but lived from day to day, and made himself feared by the right side without gaining the confidence of the left. He had no following of his own, though he liked to talk about his "party." He was not a regular attendant at the sittings of the Assembly, and hardly ever came in the evening. He relied so much on his own opinions that he did not condescend to consult anyone or to consider their approbation of any value. For a long time he was completely isolated, and did not understand the preparatory tactics which are necessary for the formation of a permanent and solid party in the Assembly. But in several respects he developed rapidly; nobody profited more than he did by experience. Reybaz, who had written his speeches on the "Assignats," told me that in the last six months he had formed a systematic plan by which he hoped to organize a powerful and united party in favour of the monarchy and against the Jacobins, and that in consequence he had become the man of the moment.

Much has been said about his venality. If one gave ear to the opinion of some, one might believe that Mirabeau's talents had been at the disposal of the highest bidder. "Since I have been in the market," he once said, "I ought to have earned enough money to purchase a kingdom. I can't imagine how it is I am so poor, as all the monarchs in the world are said to be at my disposal."

It is, however, only too certain that he had not a very delicate sense of honour in money matters, but he had some pride, and would have thrown any one out of the window who dared to make him any humiliating proposals. He was first "Monsieur's" and latterly one of the King's pensioners, but he looked on himself in the light of their business agent, and accepted their pensions in order to rule them instead of being ruled by them. M. de Narbonne told me one day that he heard him say, "A man of my standing might accept 100,000 dollars, but you cannot get a man of my sort for that sum."

It is possible that this boast may have been the result of vanity, which in the same way causes a ballet girl to exaggerate the price that she places on her favours.

If he was bought by Spain and England, one wonders what became of the sums of money he was supposed to have received from these countries, and why did he die insolvent?

The expenses of his establishment were very large in comparison with his fortune, but he only kept up the retinue of a man of moderate riches, and if he spent money in the

King's interests he cannot be reproached with cupidity, as in this case he was only acting as banker for the Crown.

I imagine that Mirabeau's reputation suffered considerably from the effect of his doubtful conduct, and that the exaggeration of this was the penalty he had to pay to public opinion. He understood only too well that if his personal character was respected, the whole of France would be at his feet, and at times he would have consented to pass through flames of fire if by doing so he could render the name of Mirabeau pure and above reproach. I have heard him exclaim amidst bitter tears of sorrow, "I am cruelly expiating the errors of my youth."

His vanity exposed him to much ridicule, which, however, no one dared to show after he became celebrated. He was the subject of several comedies, such as "L'Auteur," "Le Noble," "Le Tribun du Peuple," etc. He loved to receive praise wholesale and retail; he was insatiable in this respect, and did not grudge bestowing it on himself. He gloried in his fencing exploits, in his dramatic recitations, in his press notices, in short, in everything he undertook. One day I said jestingly to him, that as far as flattery went, "*Il déjeunerait d'un éléphant et souperait d'un ciron*,"[1] but this little joke of mine was nearly the cause of a serious quarrel between us.

The future historian of the Revolution will have great difficulty in describing Mirabeau's public character. He was essentially monarchical, and was opposed to the great

[1] He could swallow a camel and would not strain at a gnat. (?)

movement by which the Commons accomplished the French Revolution, that is to say, to the decree which destroyed the three orders and founded the National Assembly. Afterwards he upheld the necessity of the *veto absolu*, because in his eyes the King was an integral part of the legislative power. It is true that after the Royal session of the 21st of June, he was the first to maintain the Assembly against the King, and this was a decisive moment, but his action must be judged by the existing circumstances, and not by the misfortunes which converted the overthrow of the throne into a tragedy.

At this period, the greatest danger came from the party that wished to dissolve the Assembly, and to destroy all hopes of national liberty. The whole nation was alarmed at the proposal, for which they were not prepared, and if Mirabeau's conduct is to be critised, that of France must also be included.

He wished to give France a constitution as like that of England as the circumstances of the two countries would allow; but it must be confessed that his impetuosity, his desire for popularity, the weakness of the Court party, the reluctance they showed in employing him, the distrust of M. Necker, and the dislike of the King, caused him to commit many errors, and rendered his political career a tortuous and irregular one.

If he had lived he might have held the Jacobins in check, even if he had not crushed them, and it is probable, that in the making of the constitution he would have exerted great

influence. He would have strengthened the executive power, and above all, he would have resisted the absurd decree by which the members of the Assembly, by declaring themselves ineligible for election to the second legislative body, abandoned the whole of their former work. He had already twice anticipated and prevented this decree being passed, which was proposed first by the aristocrats, and afterwards by the left side.

Mirabeau is the only man of whom it might be said that if he had lived, the destiny of France would have taken a different course. His death gave courage to all parties. Robespierre, Pétion, and many others who were insignificant in comparison with him, became at once of importance.

Mirabeau, though not a great man, was at all events an extraordinary one: as an author he is not in the first rank, as an orator he cannot be compared with Cicero and Demosthenes, nor with Pitt and Fox; the greater part of his writings are already forgotten, and his speeches, with the exception of a small number, have now lost their interest. But in considering the most characteristic traits of his genius, I think they are to be found in his political intuition, in the power he had of foretelling events, and in his knowledge of human nature. In this he was supreme, and distanced all the most distinguished of his contemporaries. There were moments when he said he felt he was a prophet, and in truth he appeared to be inspired as to future events.

He was not believed, because he saw further than others,

and because his chagrin was often imputed to wounded pride; but I know that even at the time that he foretold disaster to the Monarchy, he still had the highest belief in the future of the French nation. In his "Lettres au Major Mauvillon," it is evident that he believed it capable of resisting the whole of Europe, and this correspondence contains some passages, which show the extent of his survey of the political horizon.

In 1782 he met, at Neuchâtel, our Genevese exiles, and described the meeting of the States General to them as an event that could not help being a success. "I shall be one of the deputies," he said, "and shall re-create your country for you."

No one saw as clearly as he did what would be the sequel to the Royal session, nor more thoroughly perceived all the points of view of the popular party. I recollect two speeches that were truly prophetic, in which he depicted all the consequences that would accrue on the separation of the King from the Commons. "You will," he said, "have massacres, violence, pillage, butcheries, but you will not even have the execrable honour of a civil war."

One knows what his anxieties were during the course of the cruel illness which brought his life so rapidly to an end. "I carry away with me," he said to the Bishop of Autun, "the last rags of Monarchy."

It was the same political insight that enabled him to understand the spirit of the Assembly, and to embarrass his opponents, by revealing their hidden motives, and

unmasking what they wished to conceal: there was no political enigma that he could not unravel; he discovered the deepest secrets, and his intuition was of more value than a whole host of spies in the enemies' camp. I used to think that his severe judgements on others were the result of hatred or jealousy, but events always justified him, and there was no man of mark in the Assembly, whose conduct did not eventually agree with the idea he had formed of his character.

He had led such a stormy life, had been so buffeted by the waves of fortune, that in addition to his natural gifts, and to his powers of insight, he had acquired a vast experience of the world, of men, and of their affairs. He took in quickly the "nuances" of their characters; he had even invented a language peculiar to himself, to describe the results he arrived at. He had his own terms to express "fractions" of talents, of virtues, of qualities, or of vices, "halves" and "quarters," and he seized at a glance, apparent or real discrepancies in men's dispositions. Vanity, pretension, concealed ambitions, crooked dealings, none of these ever escaped him; but he could also appreciate goodness, morality, and purity, and no one had a higher esteem than he for strong and virtuous characters.

There was in him an enthusiasm for the highest good which was never dimmed by his own shortcomings. He was like a glass which might be darkened for a moment, but which was always able to regain its brightness. His conduct often contradicted his words, but this did not result from

falsehood, but from inconsistency. He had a sense of purity that elevated his soul, and violent passions which threw it off its balance. In one word he was colossal.

There was in him much of everything, much good, much evil. No one could know him without being strongly interested in him, and he was a man born to fill by his immense activity a noble sphere.

CHAPTER XV

ANECDOTES AND SAYINGS

MIRABEAU was fond of nicknaming people after well-known historical characters; this was a telling way of portraying them shortly in a single word. Voltaire set him the example by naming the King of Prussia "Alaric-Cottin." Mirabeau generally designated Sieyes by the name of "Mahomet," particularly at the time when he ruled the Commons. He called d'Esprémenil "Crispin-Catilina," which describes the ridiculous character of his conspiracies. He very happily gave the name of the "Red Flag" to the inflexible Camus, in allusion to Martial Law, and also to the colour of his nose, which was of a ruddy hue.

In speaking of M. de Lafayette, he said: "He wishes to be a "Grandison-Cromwell"; he looked on him as an ambitious failure, who wished to exercise power without having the courage to grasp it or the means of doing so. In this case his hatred made him unjust: he said of him, "*qu'il avait bien sauté pour reculer*," meaning that he did not maintain the reputation he had made in America. He accused him of only caring for a press reputation. M. de

Narbonne said that Lafayette had all the great virtues, but that in all of them there was something wanting; nevertheless, Mirabeau confessed that he was courageous and calm.

In discussing Washington, everyone agreed in praising his rectitude and discretion, but owing to his virtues being too equally balanced, his character was wanting in brilliancy. Mirabeau respected him, but said that if he had been in his place, after having succeeded in accomplishing the American Revolution, he would have rallied round him all his followers, and would have set off to attempt the conquest of the Spanish possessions in America. The fact is that Mirabeau felt himself incapable of leading a quiet and noble life in peace and privacy, "otium cum dignitate."

He said of Necker: "He is like a clock that is always too slow." The intimacy we had endeavoured to bring about between them had no good results. M. Necker did not understand all the advantages that would ensue from an alliance with him, and he refused to trust him. He was as particular about his political intimacies as he was about his private friendships or his family alliances. He did not make sufficient allowance for the times in which he lived, and Mirabeau thought him weak and inefficient; he looked on him as a revolutionary pigmy. "Mallebranche sees God in everything," he said, "but M. Necker only sees himself." He accused him of thinking that the entire kingdom was comprised in the Rue Vivienne,[1] that is to say, that it had

[1] Answering to our Lombard Street.

no interest for him beyond its financial aspect and its matters of stocks and funds, etc.

M. Necker assumed the prudery of the honest man who refuses to have any connection with a roué, which was the character he assigned to Mirabeau. He even denied ever having had the slightest acquaintance with him. I mentioned this to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who assured me that I was mistaken. "I have it," he said, "from M. Necker himself that he has only seen Mirabeau twice, both times at Versailles and only in connection with Genevese affairs. He asked for an interview, which it was impossible to refuse." It is true that Genevese affairs were the ostensible pretext for this meeting, but they were not the real object of it. What weakness this denial shows in a man of his talents!

He said of Clavière, that he had the brain of a man and the heart of a child; that he required regulating, and if left to himself did not keep time.

I have forgotten the name of one of the members who had been employed at the commencement of the session as a speaking trumpet for the eloquence of others, and who one day delivered a speech, which had been written for him and which was greatly superior to his usual ones: Mirabeau called him the "*Paillasse de l'Eloquence.*"

One day in the Assembly he was looking at the figure of Time, armed with his scythe and hour-glass, and he exclaimed, "We have seized his scythe, but have forgotten to take his timepiece. The National Assembly," he said, "is in want of a Fabius, it has had plenty of Hannibals."

Speaking of the illusions which so many men had experienced, and which had passed away never to return, he said: "For a long time we have been gazing at a magic lantern, but now the glass is broken."

"When a pond is full," he said, "a mole may cause an inundation by boring through the bank."

Some one who wished to "denigrer" Mirabeau indirectly, said to me: "We call Clermont-Tonnerre the Pitt of France." "That may be," I said, "but it would be interesting to know if Mr. Pitt would care to be called the Clermont-Tonnerre of England."

Mirabeau repeated with pleasure an anecdote about his brother, the Vicomte de Mirabeau, who was a clumsy, heavily-made man, and who was called by the populace "Tonneau-Mirabeau." One evening, he was paying a visit to Mesdames, the King's aunts, and the porter of their apartments, deceived by the darkness of the passage, and by the heavy tread of the Vicomte, thought that it was Monsieur, the King's brother, and in consequence announced him as he opened the door as "Monsieur." "Oh!" said the Vicomte, "it is only the Monsieur who is the brother of King Mirabeau," and the whole company laughed at the allusion, in which there was a good deal of truth.

One day, Mirabeau was dining with the Comte de Montmorrin, and the Comte asked him what he thought of his brother. "Well," he said, "in any other family than ours he would be thought a clever man and a rascal." But the Vicomte returned the compliment, for, one evening, when

he presented himself at an evening party in a very disreputable condition, for he was hardly ever sober, he said: "Well, this is the only vice that my brother has not appropriated."

Doubts have been expressed as to Mirabeau's personal courage, because he very wisely refused to fight duels during the sitting of the National Assembly. "They can employ as many assassins as they like," he said, "and in that way they will always be able to get rid of any one who offends them, because even if one killed ten of them, one would probably succumb to the eleventh." He always carried pistols, as did his servants, as he feared that he might be assassinated, though without much cause, as no attempt of the sort was ever made, and in view of the disposition of the people at that time it would have been most dangerous to commit such a crime.

Once while we were at Versailles, after leaving us at about eleven o'clock at night he very shortly returned in a palpable state of agitation. He was not alone, but was accompanied by a servant whose arm he had seized on perceiving that a man wrapped in a cloak was waiting at the corner of the street. We sallied forth with him to find out who it could be. We found the suspicious looking person still there, but he did not try to escape, and allowed us to accost him without showing any signs of fear. "Sir," said Mirabeau, "may I ask what you are doing here at this hour?" The stranger replied that he was waiting for his master who was in a neighbouring house. "And will you

let me inquire why you conceal a sword under your cloak?" "Because," he answered, "my master gave it me when he went into this house and bade me keep it till he returned." We did not think that there appeared to be any question of a dangerous or sinister intention about this, and we therefore accompanied Mirabeau to his own door and returned safely without misadventure.

His servants were devoted to him. I went with him to the Bastille three or four days after it had been taken; we visited all the accessible places, and then descended into a dungeon, where his servant was not allowed to follow him. The poor fellow burst into tears, and begged me to see that his master was not killed in one of these black holes. The idea of the Bastille filled the minds of the people with horror, and even the empty carcase of the monster gave them fearful nightmares.

I forgot to describe in its right place in my story, this visit of ours to the Bastille; for Mirabeau it was a triumphant progress: the crowd which had assembled round the building drew up at his approach and greeted him by throwing flowers and verses into his carriage, which was also filled with the books and manuscripts that had been seized from the prison. I kept some of the most curious of them for two or three months, but the Committee of the Hôtel de Ville, who were printing the reports, requested those who were in possession of these manuscripts to return them. I therefore gave them up.

Mirabeau had a valet named Teutch, who had been a

smuggler, and who related feats of prodigious valour without thinking that there was anything extraordinary about them. "These fillibusters," said Mirabeau, "degrade the virtue of courage; the greatest intrepidity belongs to the lowest type of mankind."

He required much personal service, as he was very particular about his appearance; his dressing occupied a great deal of time; he enlivened the proceedings occasionally by bestowing a few cuffs and kicks on Teutch, who took them as marks of friendship, and if his master was too busy, and passed a few days without paying him these small attentions, he did his work in a melancholy way, and the time passed heavily.

"What's the matter with you, Teutch? You seem very dull!"

"M. le Comte has neglected me completely lately."

"What do you mean?"

"M. le Comte is so solemn with me now."

So that out of good nature he was obliged from time to time to hit him a blow in the stomach, and if he was knocked down, he went into fits of laughter. Teutch's despair at his death was inconceivable. His secretary thought it necessary to go beyond the public in their grief, and inflicted several wounds on himself with a penknife, but he took care, nevertheless, that they should not be of such a character as to cause death!

Mirabeau left a son of about five or six years of age. He was alternately petted and neglected. "This child," he

said, by way of praising him, "has a savage disposition." He thought that every one of the Mirabeau race must be something extraordinary. I thought that the child was very much neglected, and I sometimes caressed him, and was quite surprised by the "savage" child taking my hands and, instead of biting them, covering them with kisses. He appeared to be very gentle, and would have easily been managed by a little care and affection. His father behaved by him as he did by himself, and stole the witty sayings of other children in order to attribute them to him.

Mirabeau had much affection and esteem for Cabanis, who was inexperienced as a doctor, but who had an unbounded admiration for him, was full of kindness, and was only too happy to be able to contribute to his reputation by taking care of his health. At the beginning of his illness, though he felt from the first that it was taking a very grave turn, he refused to call in anyone else, for fear of showing any distrust in Cabanis or of robbing him of the credit of his cure. Cabanis has recorded the course of the malady and his treatment of it. I was at Geneva at the time, and our cleverest doctors there came to the conclusion that from the second day of the illness the doctor mistook the case and lost his head, owing to the greatness of the responsibility. Two years later, I heard the same thing from the physicians in Edinburgh. They did not actually say that the treatment caused his death, but they thought that nothing was done that might have cured it. They dis-

carded all idea of poison, of which there were no signs, but attributed his death to inflammation of the bowels.

The Bishop of Autun, who often saw him during the illness, which only lasted four or five days, told me that whenever the awful attacks of pain were at an end, he became calm and gentle and full of amiability for all those who were with him, and this he continued to the last. He knew that he was the object of general interest, and bore himself as a great and noble actor in the theatre of his Country. The Bishop of Autun made an appropriate remark which I shall always remember: "He has dramatized his death," he said to me. In his last convulsive agonies, when covered with a cold sweat, there were moments when he could no longer bear his life. "If," he said, "there is the smallest chance of your saving me, I will bear the pain, but if you have no hope, I implore you to have the humanity to shorten the torments I am enduring, of which you can have no idea"; and after one of his most violent attacks, which had vanquished all his patience and caused him to scream aloud, he sent for his papers and chose from among them a speech he had made on the "Testamens." "There," he said to the Bishop of Autun, "these are my last thoughts; I entrust them to you, and you shall read them after my death. It is my legacy to the Assembly."

This speech on the "Testamens" was, to my certain knowledge, the work of M. Reybaz. It was written with much care in a style quite different from that of Mirabeau, and it is remarkable that, even on his deathbed, he should

have preserved the desire for a borrowed reputation; all the more as he possessed so much personal fame, and had no need of the spoils of others.

Amongst his papers was found a speech on the slave trade that was compiled by various hands, but in which there was much of his own freely contributed work. I recollect one of his descriptions contained a fine image: "Let us follow across the Atlantic this vessel laden with captives, or rather this long bier."

This speech he read to the Jacobin club, as he was anxious for their approval, and it produced so much effect that all those interested in the subject of the slave trade, united in their efforts to prevent the subject from being discussed in the Assembly, as they were afraid that Mirabeau's speech would create so much enthusiasm as to cause the abolition of the trade.

If I had not lived with him, I should never have known how much it is possible to accomplish in a single day. One day to him was worth as much as a week to others. The amount of business that he carried on at the same time was prodigious, and once a project was conceived, he lost no time in executing it. "To-morrow" was, in his case, not the impostor it proves for other people. Conversation alone tempted him from his work, and he even used that as a means of helping him, for it was nearly always after some talk with him that we set to work and prepared his writings. He read little but very rapidly, and at once perceived all that was novel and interesting in any book. If alterations

or corrections were necessary in his speeches, he required numerous copies of them to be written out. This manual work often exceeded what could be accomplished by those whose business it was, but his impatience was well known, and it had to be done. "Monsieur le Comte," said his secretary to him one day, "what you require is impossible." "Impossible!" he said, rising from his chair, "never let me hear that stupid word again."

Mirabeau's connection with the Court party, during the last six months of his life, had for its object his entry into the Government. To accomplish this, it was necessary for him to annul many of the Assembly's laws, and to him at this time is attributed a counter-revolutionary plot: of this I know nothing, but his hatred and contempt for the Assembly make it not improbable for it to have been the case. I am inclined to believe that he wished to re-establish the Royal power, but also that he meant the Constitution to be on English lines, and that he never would agree to any plan of which a national representative assembly was not the foundation. He thought it absolutely necessary to have an aristocracy, for he believed it essential to the existence of the Monarchy, and the decree which had abolished all titles of nobility was one of those which he wished to revoke.

Bouillé's Memoirs leave no doubt as to the connection of Mirabeau with the Court from the beginning of 1791. In the King's letter to Bouillé, he writes referring to Mirabeau and others: "Though these men are not all of high char-

acter, and though I have paid an enormous sum for the services of the principal one, I believe nevertheless that they will be useful to me, and parts of their scheme seem to be worthy of adoption." One sees that Mirabeau's plan was for the Assembly to be dissolved, at the initiative of the nation, by causing petitions from the departments to be sent to pray for this object, and without employing foreign armies or destroying the hopes of Liberty; he meant, immediately on its dissolution, to ask that another Assembly should be summoned. From what one sees of this plan, one cannot consider Mirabeau as a man who wished to betray the cause of the people; he was too clever for that; he knew very well that all his strength consisted in his popularity, and that if he restored absolute power to the King, his own influence would be annihilated.

All his ambitions were centred on establishing a government which was to eclipse all former ones. He felt himself strong enough to draw all distinguished men round him, and he wished, he said, to compose an "aureole" of talents, the glory of which was to dazzle the whole of Europe.

CHAPTER XVI

THE KING'S FLIGHT

I RETURNED from Geneva in the month of May, 1791, and went to live with Biddermann the banker, who was a Swiss, and with whom I was well acquainted. His house was the rendezvous of several members of the Assembly: Clavière, Brissot, Reybaz, were all friends of his. I rarely went to the sittings, as they did not interest me now that Mirabeau was no more. They were now occupied with details relating to military matters, municipalities, and the issuing of the assignats. The influence of the Jacobins was much increased, as Mirabeau's death had freed them from their greatest enemy, and the hopes and ambitions of the small fry now rose to the surface.

The King had recently been to the Assembly, and had voluntarily renewed his oath of fidelity to the constitution. Fifteen days later, he was in full flight. He had stolen out of the palace in the evening and had escaped by deceiving Lafayette and his guards. The secret had been so well kept that no suspicion of this had caused any apprehension; d'André was told of it at six o'clock by one of his friends

who was a valet in the palace, but he refused to believe it. It appeared impossible to manage to elude the vigilance of so many.

The Assembly showed itself on this occasion worthy of its best traditions. The right side hardly dared to express its joy; the left, anxious about an event which might be the signal for the commencement of a civil war, resolved to act prudently. Quiet and prompt measures were taken to bring back the monarch, and in the Assembly the event was only spoken of as if it was a conspiracy against the King himself, a violent abduction for which the nation would be revenged. Everyone wished to quiet the anxieties of the people, and occupied themselves in their ordinary affairs as if nothing particular had happened, and as if the King had started on an ordinary journey for pleasure. This moderation was the result of opposing passions which counteracted each other; but it also proves that the majority of the members were honest and enlightened men who were capable of understanding all the consequences that might result from their actions, and who did not wish to endanger the peace of France. If the King had not been arrested it is very probable that the majority of the Chamber would have treated with him, and would have satisfied his principal causes of complaint.

As for the people of Paris, they seemed to be full of common sense; they were as calm as possible. On all sides one heard jokes about the royal family. It is true the jests were bitter ones, and showed that they were

no longer trusted or held in respect. "The traitor is unmasked," they said. "This shows how much value can be placed on the oaths and promises of the Court. We were much deceived if we thought it possible that a King could really espouse the cause of liberty, or renounce the pleasures of despotism." I heard remarks of this nature in many public resorts. There was no expression of contumely that was not bestowed in the calmest manner possible on the King. In the space of a few hours all the signs of royalty disappeared one after the other. Placards bearing the name of the King and his family were knocked down. Revenge was taken even on the emblems of royalty, and nothing was left that could recall the idea of "A King who had broken his oath." Songs of a most ribald nature enlivened the streets, and almost at once people got accustomed to the idea that a King was not a necessity. Changeability, carelessness, frivolity, those are the chief characteristics of the people of Paris. "If the King has left us," they said, "the nation remains; one can have a nation without a King, but not a King without a nation." Certainly, if the King imagined that the populace would be dismayed at his departure, he must have been much astonished at the general indifference that was shown by them.

Confidence in the Assembly was the dominant sentiment. At first, M. de Lafayette was in some danger, because it was thought that he was an accomplice, but when it was discovered that the Court had deceived him, his popularity became all the greater. "Our great obstacle has now been

removed," was written to me by one who rejoiced that the King had abdicated.

At this time the famous Payne was in Paris, and was being well received by Condorcet. He gave himself all the credit of the American Revolution, and believed it was his mission to bring about another one in France.

I was now seized with an idea to write on the events that were happening, under the name of "The Shade of Mirabeau," and I took a secret pleasure in seeing what would be the judgement of the public on a work that should bear the traces of his mind. I began with some success, inspired by the circumstances of the King's flight, which I represented as being a Court conspiracy. I implored the Nation to give all its support to the Assembly, and I pressed the Assembly to declare itself in favour of the King, and, as soon as they had set him at liberty, to punish the conspirators who had insulted the Nation's monarch. I then addressed myself to the King, and expatiated on the misfortunes that must follow a prince who attempted to conquer a nation by force and become a member of the odious class of tyrants. I flattered myself that I had successfully evoked Mirabeau's spirit and had used language and sentiments that he would not have disdained.

Just then Duchâtelet came to see me. After some preambles, he asked me to read an English manuscript which was written in the form of a proclamation addressed to the French nation. This was nothing less than a manifesto against royalty, and an invitation to seize the opportunity

of forming a republic. Payne was the author of this composition, and Duchâtelet was determined to adopt it, to sign it with his own name, and to spread it abroad all over Paris, and then to take the consequences of his action. He came to ask me to translate it into French, and to develop it in any way I thought advisable. I began to discuss with him this strange proposal, and I showed him the objections there would be in raising the banner of a republic without the consent of the National Assembly. I asked him if he had consulted any of the leaders of public opinion, if he had seen Sieyes or Lafayette. It appeared that he and Payne were acting entirely alone; that is to say, an American and a thoughtless young French nobleman were putting themselves forward to alter the whole of the French constitution. I absolutely refused to translate his address in spite of all his entreaties. He assured me that I should not be compromised by doing this, and that it would in any case be accomplished, that I might help him as a friend, and at the same time need not approve of his proceedings. I remained inflexible, and decided to send "Mirabeau's Shade" back to the tomb, foreseeing that, if I continued to write under this name I should be compromised. The republican placard, signed by Duchâtelet, was the next morning to be seen on every wall in Paris, and was at once denounced by the Assembly.

The idea of a republic had not yet been directly suggested by anyone, and the first signal of it produced consternation amongst the Right side, as well as amongst

the Moderates of the Left. Mallouet, Cazalès, and several others, proposed to prosecute the author; but Chapelier and a number of others feared that, by doing this the fire would be increased instead of extinguished; they therefore passed the order of the day with a rider that the proposition was demented, and the author mad.

I may say that Duchâtelet approached several people on the subject, that none of them would listen to him, that Sieyes, with the greatest contempt, refused to help him; several others replied that the time had not yet arrived for such a proposal, and Lafayette said that at least twenty years must elapse before the cause of liberty would be sufficiently ripe to enable France to become a republic.

But the seed which had been sown by Payne's daring hand began to germinate in several brains. From the moment of the King's flight, Condorcet had become a republican. Clavière, Pétion and Buzot discussed the question together. It was talked of at Bidermann's, and I witnessed the formation of the first germs of the idea, which was meanwhile gaining strength in the southern provinces. This was what was commonly said at the time: "The King has lost the confidence of the people and can never regain it. The Nation will never forget his flight, especially after the positive and even gratuitous promises that he made. He will not himself be able to forget that he has been brought back by force, and that he only reigns by sufferance over a people who despise him for his weakness, and who look on him as a traitor. The first elements of a monarchy are de-

stroyed; the King appears only in the light of a conspirator, and there is nothing so absurd as to confide great constitutional powers on one who has declared himself opposed to them."

This argument was a strong one against the King, but a weak one against a monarchy. This distinction, however, was not made because there was a difficulty which there was no means of removing, as to putting any other member of the royal family on the throne, the Duke of Orleans being altogether too contemptible a personage to be considered for a moment.

It was already said that for the last two years the country had been governed by the Assembly and not by the King. His partisans only threw impediments in the way; it was the Assembly who provided the resources, and to whom obedience was rendered. Condorcet said: "If a republic is established by a rising of the people against the Court, the consequences will be terrible; but if it is accomplished now while the Assembly is still all powerful, its birth will be an easy one: it is better that it should be determined on now when the King no longer possesses any power, than to put it off till later when he may have regained part of his position, as his fall then will be all the greater." As for Royalty, it was considered a scarecrow with which to frighten children, or as a plaything to amuse men. But it is always the worst of evils not to "bear the ills one has, rather than fly to others one knows not of." What form of republic was suggested? How could one argue about such a vague expression?

While the Assembly was discussing what line they should adopt as to the conduct of the King, the budding Republicans already wished to bring him to trial, to declare that he had abdicated, and to place the Dauphin on the throne, or to announce boldly the birth of the Republic.

I remember one day we went to see Pétion, to ask what had passed in the Assembly as to the King's return. He was engaged in playing his violin, and Brissot was much annoyed at the indifference and frivolity he showed while the fate of the Monarch was at stake. Pétion and Barnave had been the two *députés* who had been sent to Varennes to fetch back the King; this honour had in no way affected him: Barnave, he told us, was just like a provincial bourgeois, full of astonishment and admiration at finding himself in the same carriage as the King. As for Pétion, he had felt no compassion for a prince fallen from his high estate. His self-love had directed him to look for success from the popular party, and he did not care for Court honours. He was a courtier of the People, and despised the courtiers of the King. He saw plainly that the popular road led to power, and the royal one to nothing at all. He was one of those men who are quite able to dispense with money and luxury. I think he was incorruptible as far as his pecuniary interests were concerned, but there are so many other sources of corruption!

Brissot was still more disinterested, but he was a fanatic and full of prejudices. He had many virtues, but they were corrupted by party spirit, and degenerated into vices.

He was a man born for good purposes, who became an instrument of evil.

I had a high opinion of Condorcet, and he had much influence. His house was really the focus of the Republic.[1] It is said that Madame Condorcet had received some insult from the Queen, and that her zeal for the Republic was in reality the revenge of an injured woman; but I do not believe this. She had a serious nature and mind that liked to give itself up to philosophic thought, and a passion for Rousseau's works had excited her brain. Her husband's enthusiasm came from reason, hers from sentiment. Both of them were strongly convinced that liberty could not exist in France in conjunction with the throne. Payne had given them false ideas as to England which I vainly endeavoured to expel. America appeared to them to be the model for all good governments, and they thought it would be easy to transplant the system of federation into France. Condorcet was not a Jacobin; he saw what the Jacobins were contemplating, but he wished the Republic to be established by the Assembly instead of by the populace. The most inconsistent men at this time were those who, like Sieyes, were not themselves republicans,

[1] France's greatest misfortune was that the Republic was created during a time of storm instead of being the result of calm deliberation. I do not say that it is possible to make a good French Republic, I only say that the same causes that took away the power from the King, would also have prevented his authority ever being restored; and it is from this point of view that Condorcet and his party ought to be judged.

and yet who never ceased to attack the feeble remnants of Royal authority.

Robespierre was so terrified by the King's flight that he concealed himself for two entire days, and even contemplated departing for Marseilles. When the King returned, he began to listen cautiously to Brissot and Pétion; he wished to destroy the Monarchy without declaring himself in favour of the Republic.

The first republicans, therefore, were not the satellites of the Duc d'Orléans; they were independent men, and I do not know that one can find any fault with them as long as their opinions only remained opinions. The King's departure was a proof that the Court would not be reconciled to the Constitution, which was at that time the idol of France.

Several members of the Assembly held at this time wiser opinions; they understood that by rendering a good and virtuous prince the object of general loathing they had thrown him into a false and hopeless position. From this time Lafayette feared the Jacobins more than the Royalists. Duport, Barnave, and the Lameths saw the necessity of approaching the monarch and of attaching him to the Constitution by making their interests identical. They worked on this new plan, but their powers of destruction were greater than those of re-construction, and when they became moderate they lost the popularity they had gained by their former violence.

I was a very short time in Paris after the King's return, and I went to London accompanied by the notorious Payne,

whom I had only seen five or six times, and whose prejudices against England I forgave on account of his being an American. But his incredible and presumptuous self-sufficiency disgusted me, his vanity really amounted to madness. If one trusted to his own account, one might have thought that he had accomplished all that had taken place in America. He was a caricature of a vain Frenchman. He thought that his book on the Rights of Man took the place of all other books; he did not disguise from us that if he had the power he would annihilate every library in the world, in order to put an end to the errors they served to propagate, and to start a fresh system of the ideas and principles which were all contained in his great work. He knew all his own books by heart, but he knew nothing else. He even recited to us his love letters, which were written in a strange and odd style worthy of Mascarille. He was a clever man, full of imagination, and gifted with eloquence, but my curiosity about this clever writer was more than satisfied during our journey, and I never saw him again.

When I was in London, my friends sent me the first numbers of the "Republican," a periodical to which I had promised to contribute; but while I was in England, my opinions changed, and I no longer held the excited ideas that took possession of me in Paris whilst living in such seductive and agreeable society. I now looked at everything from a different point of view. I wrote to Clavière, not only to tell him that I withdrew from my engagement, but to represent to him that this periodical

was running counter to the Assembly and the Constitution, and that it would be a real offence to continue its publication, and that he and all his friends would be incapable of serving their country if they persisted in holding opinions which were only those of a small faction, particularly as now that the King was re-established on the throne, the circumstances had changed as to the advisability of declaring a republic. I wrote in the same way to Madame Condorcet. Clavière soon afterwards told me that the "Republican" had ceased to appear, and that the idea of a republic no longer existed, that the tide had turned in favour of the monarchy, and that the Assembly itself was working in an anti-revolutionary spirit, and that any suspicion of republicanism was looked at in an unfavourable light.

I had written an article for this republican paper, which was printed during my absence with most dishonest alterations, consisting of additions and suppressions, and insulting expressions towards the King that in no way represented either my opinions or my character.

The Assembly was then engaged revising the Constitution. It showed a disposition to retrieve its errors, to correct its exaggerations, and to associate the King with liberty and the public welfare. But the party called "La Montagne" was against any strengthening of the executive power. If the moderate and reasonable party could have joined them and worked together, it is probable that the constitution would have received essential improvements.

I knew most of these details from D'André, who played the principal part in affairs during these four months; he was the cleverest and most pliable personage of the time, and showed more adroitness than anyone else in preparing and passing different motions. As soon as a plan had been settled on in a small committee consisting of Lafayette, La Rochefoucauld, etc., D'André went in good time to the Assembly, and as soon as the members arrived, he consulted with them, gave them his advice and induced them to request him to introduce the measure, and only engaged to do so after they had promised their support. It was in this manner that he cemented his party together; and whilst, in reality, inducing them to adopt his policy, he appeared to be merely acting according to their advice.

The "Montagne" Party, often worsted by D'André, hated him; Brissot, in his paper the "Patriote" abused him with an incredible bitterness. The Jacobins looked on him as a man who had been bought by the King; though he had much talent and dexterity he had not the oratorical gifts which impress the public, and in consequence he was never popular. Sieyes, who was sometimes in an amusing vein, was fond of relating an imaginary dialogue which was supposed to take place between D'André and his valet.

D'André.—"What is the order for the day?"

Jean.—"The question of the presence of the King's Commissioners, sir."

D'André.—"Oh! Well, take off this coat, and give me the old one."

Jean.—"It's all out of elbows, sir."

D'André.—"That's just why I want it, give me my old hat and my worst stockings."

Jean.—"Do you require your boots, sir, it's a wet day?"

D'André.—"Certainly not, they are quite new, I will have my thick shoes, those studded with nails. A little mud won't hurt them. This is an important affair, and who the devil will think about the Civil List if they see me got up like this?"

D'André complained to me more of his friends than of his enemies; they were very indolent, and were disheartened by the knowledge that their position had altered, and they were no longer in a position to reply to their adversaries who accused them of inconsistency and variableness. They had been eager enough in attack, but now that they were on their defence they had become indifferent. As often as not, after meeting together and deliberating for a long time, they settled nothing. The "Montagne" therefore reaped the advantage of at all events being true to themselves, whereas on the moderate side there were many false members who betrayed their principles.

D'André said that the greatest difficulties came from the Court party. The King listened to so many counsellors, mixed all their advice together, and in this way spoilt everything. There were numerous small intrigues, but no real concerted action. The amount of follies of which they were guilty made them very unpopular, and gave to those, who were only sincerely anxious to establish a constitutional

monarchy, the appearance of being plotters against the revolution. What disgusted them most of all was that in spite of themselves they found they were obliged to associate with men who would willingly have hanged them in order to re-establish a reign of despotism. But the Court party brought about its own destruction. The King was so badly advised, more particularly by the Queen, that he attached the greatest importance to passing the fatal decree by which the members of the first Assembly were declared ineligible to sit in the second. D'André told me all the details. He received a visit from one of the King's confidential advisers, who, after paving the way in an attractive and flattering manner by alluding to the King's gratitude and esteem, and by hinting at promises for the future, told him finally that the Court was depending on him to support the decree. D'André, who looked on it as destructive to the Constitution, did all in his power to open their eyes to its dangers; he tried to adjourn the question in order to gain time; he represented all the consequences that would result from it, but all to no avail; the blindness of the Court was complete. The Queen's resentment against most of the Left Side was so bitter that she thought that if the men who had destroyed the royal power could be excluded from the Assembly, the monarchy would be saved. She had been informed that the Provinces were on their side, that the King was beloved by his people, and that men of very different character would now be elected who would repair the damage done by their predecessors.

D'André, who was presiding when the decree was proposed, was astonished to see that the Right Side, won over by the Court, was allying itself with the Montagne Party in order to pass it without any discussion. "Aux Voix, aux Voix!" was heard on all sides. He made every effort to calm this excitement and to enable his supporters to speak on the question, but with no success, and the decree was carried unanimously, those who were the instruments of their own destruction being the most delighted at their success.

The Constitution was now a real "monster." There was too much republicanism in it to be a monarchy, and too much monarchy about it to be a republic. The King was an "hors d'œuvre," he appeared to be everything, but in reality was nothing at all.

CHAPTER XVII

CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

NO event was ever of so much interest to the whole of Europe as the convocation of the States General. Farseeing men of sense entertained great hopes of the result of this public contest, which was to be held between ancient prejudices on the one side and the enlightened ideas of a new era on the other. They believed that a new moral and political world would emerge out of the chaos. The necessity of hopefulness was felt so strongly that all faults were pardoned, all misfortunes regarded as accidents, and in spite of all calamities the bias of public opinion remained with the constituted Assembly. It was a trial between the cause of humanity and that of despotism.

Six weeks after convocation the States General had become the National Assembly. Its first misfortune was that it owed its new title to a revolution, that is to say to a change in its powers, its substance, its title, and its methods. The Commons were to have acted in concert with the nobility, the clergy, and the King, but they subjugated all three and acted independently of them, and in opposition to them. This was, in short, the Revolution.

One may argue for ever as to what brought it about, but in my opinion it was entirely and solely owing to the character of the King. If a firm and decided character had sat on the throne in the place of Louis XVI. the Revolution would never have taken place. The whole of his reign led up to it. But at no time during the course of the first Assembly might not the King by changing his character have re-established his authority, and made a solid and lasting constitution. His indecision, weakness and improvidence, his half measures, his doubtful counsels, all contributed to ruin him. The subordinate causes which assisted in doing this all resulted from the original one. When a prince is feeble the courtiers intrigue, the people become audacious, honest folk are timid, and the most zealous followers are discouraged. Those who are really capable are put on one side, and the best advice is not followed. A King with an energetic and dignified character would have attracted all those who eventually went against him. Lafayette, the Lameths, Mirabeau, Sieyes, would never even have contemplated playing the part they did, and if they could have worked successfully by other methods their conduct would have been very different.[1] After the three orders had been forcibly united the Assembly became all-powerful, its

[1] All this part requires developing. In England there are discontented individuals, but no discontented classes. The King, the nobility, the gentry, the commercial classes, manufacturers, farmers, the clergy, the navy, all are proud of their professions, and of the respect and the ambitions which they derive from it. In France, previous to the Re-

methods were full of faults, of which the following were the principal ones:

1. Its heterogeneous composition, all the different parties being too irritated with each other ever to be able to work in concert. They only tried to impede, hinder, and get the better of each other. The discontented ones often passed violent decrees in hopes of discrediting the Assembly in the eyes of the nation. They thought that by degrading it, it would eventually destroy itself.

2. The composition of the Commons, which contained too many men without property, and lawyers who were inclined to carry democratic principles too far.

3. The bad system of debating. Procedure is for an As-

volution, discontent invaded all classes. Agriculturists and farmers were tired of the inequality and arbitrary nature of the taxes. Merchants were looked down on by the nobles; the smaller aristocracy were jealous of the higher classes, who alone had the right of being presented at Court. The "parlements," with their doubtful prerogatives, were sometimes powerful and sometimes ill-used; they were threatened with banishment if they resisted the government, and despised by the people if they complied too easily with the wishes of the Court. The lawyers, a numerous and ubiquitous body of men, had no scope for their ambitions or hope of advancement, there was no opening for merit in a kingdom in which all judicial appointments were given to the highest bidder.

There was no connecting link between the different orders. The provinces were also divided into many distinct classes, which were the cause of hatreds and rivalries; there were fifty different organizations all jealous of each other. The people, though all subjects of the same King, were enemies of each other on account of their different rights and privileges.

sembly what tactics are for an army; there was as much difference between the deliberations of the National Assembly and those of the English Parliament as there is between the sieges and adroit advances of the Austrian army and the skirmishes and irregular combats of the Croats.

4. The constitutional decrees being put in force directly they were passed and made immutable.

5. The fear of a counter revolution. Everything that suggested the revival of the Royal authority was regarded with terror.

6. Emigration, which was the greatest mistake of all; the King was weakened by this desertion, and the *emigrés* by their intrigues, by their protestations, and the anxieties they caused, excited a reaction of feeling against them.

7. The institution of the Jacobin society and its offshoots. The people were irritated by these societies, which became eventually the rivals of the National Assembly. They were hotbeds of venomous plants which could not have ripened without their aid.

8. The false tactics of the Court, which at first wished to act in opposition to the Assembly, and then, too late, attempted to make its influence felt within its walls. In this respect M. Necker showed an amount of caution that may have been meritorious to him as an individual, but which showed much ignorance as a minister. He never knew how to gain the attachment of any party; he could not agree with Mirabeau, and did not understand how to flatter Sieyes and win him over to his side.

9. The secession of the Right side, who refused to vote in the Assembly after the return of the King from Varennes, and whilst he was kept in captivity. Their inaction paralyzed the efforts of the Moderates on the revolutionary side, who were not numerous enough to resist the "Montagne." If they had joined their forces to those of Mallouet and the Lameths it would still have been possible to alter the Constitution.

This assembly, which had opened with so much splendour, closed in obscurity, and after the King's return contrived to drag on its existence in a state of combined defiance and contempt. After it realized the consequences of its excesses it tried to moderate them, but it lost the ascendancy it had formerly possessed owing to its want of initiative; it appeared to be taking back the powers it had itself given to the people, and seemed to reproach itself for its own measures, and only to pass them with disinclination and remorse.

Nothing was more brilliant than its début, and nothing more pitiful than its end.

The Assembly might well regret that it had not followed the counsels it had received of only decreeing laws provisionally, till they could all be compared together, and that it had not reserved to itself the right of subsequently modifying them.

By pursuing the opposite course mistakes became irremediable, and the effect of a bad law was to produce others still worse.

Revision, which should have been an affair of arrangement

and method, would have been most important if the Assembly had kept its independence on all subjects.

It would have brought all the mature experience which it had acquired during the three years of its existence to the work; but in its ignorant presumption it had declared itself infallible, and had made any improvements on its labours an impossibility. One might say that on passing every law the framers of it burned their ships and destroyed all means of escape.

The fact was, that every law that was passed was a party triumph, and that therefore no hope was left to the defeated side of regaining their losses. The result of these violent measures, which were declared immutable, was to bring about a revolution which destroyed them all at the end of eight months.

I will instance one proof of the defect of this system. The committee which was revising the code of the constitutional laws found itself in the greatest difficulty as to the framing and enacting of them. Twenty unsuccessful attempts were proposed and rejected. Everyone who could be consulted was pressed into the service, but for four or five weeks nothing but chaos was the result. At last M. Ramond, a friend of Lafayette, proposed an arrangement that was afterwards adopted.

I have completed, with more patience than I thought I possessed, the story of my intimacy with Mirabeau, and my recollections of the first period of the French Revolution.

It is the most interesting part, and yet it is so in only a

slight degree; I must have been a very unobservant spectator, or perhaps my memory is a very poor one. That all these events that took place before me, all the gallery of actors in them with whom I passed my days should have left such slight impressions upon my mind, is a just subject of reproach to me; it is the result of my indifference to the importance of events whilst they are passing before my eyes. It is only afterwards that I perceive their importance. I must own that I may be accused of stupidity as to this, but it is the only excuse I can give for the little that remains in my memory of these stirring scenes.

It has always been the same with me, in all the houses that I have lived in I was always the last to discover what was going on, and if some family event took place it had to be told me, I never should have guessed it by myself. I have no love of confidences, and secrets have no attraction for me.

But as to the second part, on which I am now about to enter, I have still less to record, my recollections are very scattered, and the sequence of them is often broken.

I have forgotten much, and, what is still more irreparable, I have not profited by the singular circumstances in which I was placed, and in which I could with very little trouble to myself have easily obtained much information.

I never could bring myself to ask what was not freely imparted to me. It is true that I never employed "torture," and that therefore the knowledge I have and can testify to was given to me voluntarily and openly.

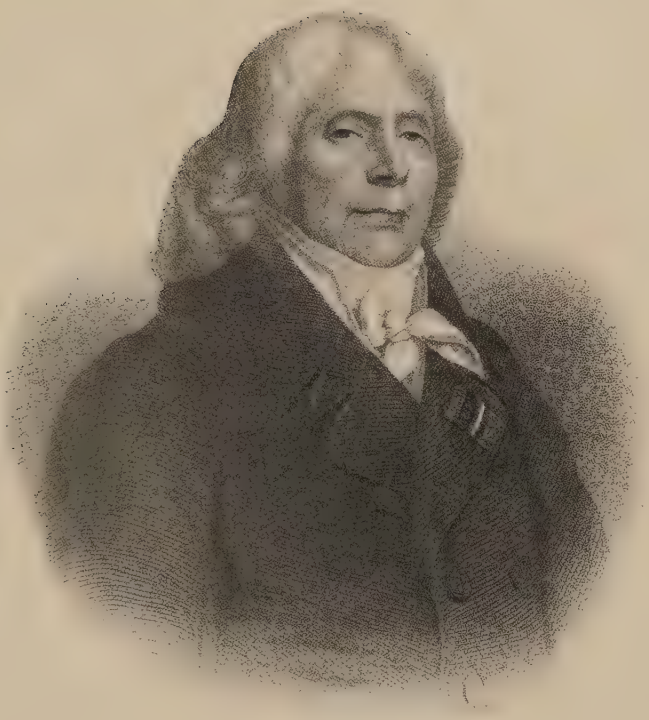
CHAPTER XVIII

IN LONDON

PÉTION was the first to arrive in England after the close of the Assembly. I had known him too well in Paris for it to be possible for me not to see him also in London, but he was so sought after and well received by one portion of the public, that it was rarely that I had the luck to find myself in his company. He received the most flattering attentions and was laden with invitations. He said that he had come to England to observe the proceedings of juries in both criminal and civil trials. He did not understand English, but a barrister who was well acquainted with the French language offered to accompany him. The day was fixed, but Pétion did not keep the engagement. He was amusing himself by showng the sights of London to one of his friends, who had just arrived.

A short time afterwards, D'André took refuge in London. Brissot most pitilessly attacked him in the "Patriote," and accused him of being a member of the King's Civil List.

If D'André had received any royal favours he did not make any ostentatious use of them. After the closing of



LE PRINCE TALLEYRAND

the Assembly, though he was of noble birth, he had the good sense to join a house of business, and he opened a grocer's shop in Paris. This proceeding, which was a popular one, and in accordance with the spirit of the times, ought to have disarmed Brissot's malice, but he was a man in whom party spirit is stronger than any other feeling. He had in a strong degree the zeal of the fanatic. If he had been a Capucin monk he would have loved his staff and his vermin, or as a Dominican he would have burnt heretics with pleasure, or if he had been a Roman citizen he would have been a worthy follower of Cato and Regulus; as a French republican he wished to destroy the monarchy, and with this object in view he indulged in every persecution and calumny, and would have enjoyed perishing on the scaffold himself if by so doing his object was accomplished.

I had known D'André at Versailles, but I had hardly ever seen him in Paris, but during the two or three years he lived in England I knew him well. Possessed of much talent and quick intuition, without being an orator, he had much facility of expression and clearness of ideas. All this combined to make him a clever and industrious politician in the National Assembly, and a good man of business in his private affairs. He was affectionate, generous, easy and simple in his manners, modest and shy in society to such a degree that though he was four times President of the Assembly, and has so often spoken before all that is greatest in France, he was disconcerted and at a

loss to sustain an argument or a conversation with three or four private individuals. What was wanting in him was any appearance of dignity, his insignificant figure did not at first sight give the impression of the talent and "finesse" he possessed, not to mention his real merit and goodness of heart.

I cannot now remember the exact date of M. de Talleyrand's arrival in London. It was not possible for him to come on a public mission, as the Assembly had passed a decree which removed from all its members the right to be employed during the next two years in an official capacity. However, he came on a "journey of observation," which was practically the same thing, established relations with the ministers and disposed them to consider the King of France in a new and constitutional light, and persuaded them to keep England's neutrality intact in case of the war, which was now considered to be inevitable, breaking out on the continent. I had not known the Bishop of Autun in Paris, but we had a sort of informal acquaintance with each other, and he had not been long in London before he made me the advances which it was his place to be the first to offer. He had been particularly recommended to the notice of Lord Lansdowne, and his distinguished reputation in politics made his company eagerly sought after by those who were not already prejudiced against everything and everybody at all connected with the French Revolution.

M. de Talleyrand was descended from one of the oldest

governing families of France. They had originally been reigning princes. He was the eldest of three brothers, but as he had been lame from his childhood he had not been thought worthy to play a part in worldly affairs, and therefore was destined for the Church, though he was a man without any tendencies that might render this state of life in the Roman communion even tolerable. I have often heard him say that, despised as he was by his parents as a poor wretched creature who was fit for nothing, he had developed from early years a taciturn and gloomy temper. He had never slept under the same roof as his father and mother, and was made to resign his rights of primogeniture in favour of his second brother. When he was at the seminary he lived in a very small circle, and his habitual melancholy had made him unsociable, and this gave him the reputation of being proud.

Condemned to belong to the Church, he did not acquire its sentiments or character any more than did the Cardinal of Retz and many others. He even transgressed the indulgence that is usually conceded to those of youth and good birth, and his morals were far from being of a clerical nature. But he knew how to observe the "bienséances," and whatever his habits were, no one knew better than he did what to talk about and what to keep to himself.

I do not know if he may not have had a wish to impose on people by an appearance of reserve and depth. At first he was very difficult of access; he was distant and spoke little, but listened with much attention. His features were

rather puffy, and his physiognomy gave one an impression of effeminacy, but a powerful and sonorous voice contrasted with this appearance. English people who have a general and prepossessed idea as to the French character did not find in him any of the vivacity, familiarity, or gaiety which they imagine belong to his nation. A sententious manner, a cold politeness, an air of criticism, these were the walls with which he surrounded himself in his diplomatic character. In his more intimate circle he was very different; he gave himself up to the pleasures of conversation, of which he was particularly fond, and sat up late at night in order to prolong his enjoyment of it. He had a familiar and friendly manner, was full of small attentions and was very easy to get on with. He wished to be amusing in order to be amused himself. He never spoke in a hurry, but chose his expressions carefully and made subtle remarks that were only understood by those who were accustomed to hearing them.

He was the author of the "mot" which has been quoted by Champfort. Rulhiere said, "I am at a loss to know why I have such a bad reputation, as I have only committed one sin in the whole of my life."

The Bishop of Autun, who as yet had not joined in the conversation, said with emphasis in his sonorous voice, "When will that one come to an end?"

One evening, whilst playing at whist, the conversation turned on a lady of sixty who had just married a valet de chambre, and much surprise was expressed at her conduct.

The Bishop, who was counting his tricks, remarked, "After nine, honours don't count." This style of wit, which he much affected, resembled that of Fontenelle, for whose writings he had a great liking.

He told me of an infamous action of a colleague of his at which I was horrified. "The man who could do that," I said, "would be capable of assassination." "Hardly that, I think," he said coolly, "but of poisoning, certainly."

His conversation and manner of telling anecdotes was a model of good taste. Born as he was to grace a position of luxury and importance, and in spite of his indolence and sensuality, he yet could accustom himself to a simple life full of privations, and he shared with his friends the only part of his resources which was saved and which consisted of the remains of a very fine library. This was sold for far less than it was worth owing to the strong feeling there was against him in London, which prevented many purchasers from coming forward.

Talleyrand had not come to London with an empty portfolio; he had a long interview with Lord Grenville, and I saw the account which he wrote of his conversation with him. Its object was to point out to England the advantages that would accrue to her from the Revolution in France by establishing in that country a constitutional sovereign and by tightening the links that joined the two Courts together, for though the government of Great Britain was not disposed in case of war to abandon its attitude of neutrality, it was at the same time full of reserve in its relations with

France, and did not sympathize with the new order of things, and had no belief in the stability of the Constitution. This coolness of the Court of St. James's made the Tuileries anxious, and Talleyrand's object was to draw them together, or if he could not do this at least to assure himself that there was nothing to fear from the English Court. Lord Grenville had been very distant, and had not responded to any of the advances made by Talleyrand. It was known that he had talked of him as a deep and dangerous man. Talleyrand had known Mr. Pitt; while he was very young he had stayed for a short time in France with the Archbishop of Rheims, who was Talleyrand's uncle. They had passed some weeks together in rather an intimate way, but when they met again Talleyrand considered that it was for Pitt to remind him of the circumstances and therefore made no allusion to their former acquaintance. Pitt, who was not anxious for any renewal of his friendship, was very careful to forget the uncle, from whom he had received hospitality, in order not to be obliged to show his nephew any special politeness, and therefore he did not even allude to him during their first and only interview.

When he was presented at Court, the King paid him little attention, and the Queen received him still more coldly, and turned her back on him with marked contempt. This treatment was due to the immoral reputation of the bishop. From that moment the great world followed the example of the Court, and Talleyrand found himself almost excluded from society, and was looked on as a dangerous

man, the agent of a faction only of the French nation, whom it was not possible to send about his business, but whom it was not well to receive with any respect. He could not promise himself much success from a mission begun under these auspices.

In the course of the month of February, 1792, Talleyrand learnt from his Paris correspondents that changes were going to take place in the Government, and that his friend Louis de Narbonne, who was at that time Minister for War, was tottering in his place. He therefore asked permission to return to Paris, and decided to take Duroverai with him. He had made his acquaintance through me, and thought that his counsels would be useful to him. Duroverai was most anxious to maintain good relations between the two nations, and flattered himself that his friendship with Talleyrand might conduce to this object, and that it would be considered in a favourable light by the Government of Great Britain. He had made great friends with Lord Sidney, and with some other members of the Cabinet, and endeavoured by his intimacy with them to combat the prejudice which they had formed against Talleyrand. Therefore his intervention was of advantage to both sides, and he thought himself called upon to be a sort of unofficial mediator between the two governments. Talleyrand required him in Paris in order that he should confirm him in his statements to Clavière, Brissot, and many others as to the feeling in England, about which they had conceived false ideas. He thought they were more likely to listen to an

old friend like Duroverai than to himself, as they might suspect his personal interest in the matter. Duroverai's opinion was a passport or letter of credit for Talleyrand to present to the popular party. It was also for these reasons that they begged me to accompany them, and I did not require much pressing in order to do so.

This expedition, which was only to have lasted for fifteen days, lasted for more than six weeks, and gave me much pleasure. I had followed the proceedings of the first Assembly too closely not to wish keenly to see the second. It was an interesting episode in my now monotonous life. If I could join my voice to theirs and by so doing dissipate the prejudices of our friends on the subject of England, and could make them feel the necessity of using a little tact in order to preserve peace, it would give a greater value to what would otherwise have only been a pleasure excursion, and would associate me with a great political movement. I was intimately acquainted with Condorcet, Clavière, and Pétion, all of whom it was essential to influence in order to induce them to work together for the same object.

J. P. Brissot

BRISSOT

CHAPTER XIX

THE FEUILLANTS AND THE GIRONDISTES

WE, therefore, started on our journey, which was a most agreeable one for me. Talleyrand held a kind of little reception inside the carriage; in this way he enjoyed an uninterrupted and intimate conversation. We discussed all our plans, hopes and opinions at length, and we never passed a dull quarter of an hour. He related the most amusing anecdotes; amongst others he told us the way in which he had consecrated the new clergy. It was necessary to have three bishops for this ceremony, but his two colleagues had hesitated up to the last moment as to officiating at it. The means that he used in order to decide one of them to do this were far from orthodox. The Bishop of Lido told him that the Bishop of Babylon was very shaky about it, upon which Talleyrand paid him a visit, and told him that their colleague, the Bishop of Lida, was going to abandon them; that he must know that if this was the case, it would expose them to the wrath of the people, and that for his part he had taken the resolution not to risk being stoned by the populace, and whilst saying this he drew from his pocket a small pistol, with which he

said he meant to shoot himself in the event of either of his two coadjutors refusing to act with him. This threat had the desired effect. The installing of the clergy effected by armed forced was, in my opinion, rather an unscrupulous proceeding, but if one considers what a dangerous position the Bishop of Autun was in, and in what a difficulty he was placed if the weakness of his colleagues had prevented the consecration of the new clergy from taking place, one must pardon the necessity for such conduct, which, after all, was the means of preventing much bloodshed.

On the 9th of March we arrived in Paris, and a friend of M. de Talleyrand's stopped our carriage in order to tell us that M. de Narbonne had been dismissed by the Court; everyone was surprised at the King being still strong enough to dare to dismiss anyone. M. de Narbonne's disgrace was caused by his union with the Girondins. His place was filled by De Graves.

I lost no time in putting myself *au courant* of the state of affairs. There were now three parties in the Assembly, all swearing by the Constitution, but all of them dissatisfied with it. The real constitutional party, of whom Vaublanc was the head, was accused of secretly wishing to extend the royal authority by forming two chambers; he, in his turn, accused the Girondistes of conspiring against the Constitution, and of wishing to form a republic.

The Girondistes accused the extreme party, "la Montagne," of spreading anarchy in order to make both parties unpopular; the Montagne accused the Constitutionalists of

having been bought by the King, etc. In short, the hatreds, accusations and exaggerations were at their highest pitch; no one could have any idea of the passions that existed in this legislative Assembly.

The "Moderantins," as the first party was called, were the most honest; the Girondistes had the greatest talents, knowledge and eloquence on their side; the "Montagne" were audacious and violent, and had all the sympathies of the populace of the faubourgs.

There were two principal clubs, one the "Feuillans," which held by the Constitution, the other the "Jacobins," whose inclinations leant towards anarchy. The Girondistes wavered between the two, and were alternately attached to either of them according to circumstances, but they were separated from the Feuillans by their opinions, though they feared the Jacobins on account of their excesses. The King was governed by the "Feuillans," the Lameths, Barnave and their friends, who were at the head of this party, and were then as much the enemies of the majority of the legislative Assembly as they had been of the Court. They only thought of ridiculing it, and bringing it into contempt, and this was not difficult, though it conduced to incite it to still greater violences. They had caused the dismissal of M. de Narbonne on account of his devotion to the Girondistes, and his attachment to them had made him equally suspected by the Jacobins.

I became intimate with the Girondistes owing to my friendship with Condorcet, Brissot, and Clavière. They

introduced me to a Madame d'Odun who gave breakfast parties in the rue Vendôme. These gatherings were generally composed of Brissot, Clavière, Roederer, Gensonné, Guadet, Vergniaud, Condorcet, the Ducots, etc. They attended them before going to the Assembly, and concocted their plans there, and as one may imagine, more talk and gossip took place at them than any serious business. Brissot was the wirepuller, and his activity was equal to everything. Their great object was to control the Court by denouncing the influence of the Austrian committee. This committee was a kind of invisible power, and anything and everything was attributed to its machinations. It was known that the King was advised by it, that it had secret conferences with the Queen, that messengers were sent to Vienna and Coblentz, and that all its ambassadors were of the "ancien régime" and had only consented to the Constitution in spite of themselves. In one word, it had a constitutional appearance, but was in reality anti-constitutional.

The more one knows about the history of this period, the more one perceives that the Court was really under a mask; the King alone showed his face openly, and then only in profile, and it is certain that if he could have modified the Constitution he would have done so. In this he would have been excusable, as all thoughtful men were now agreed that it did not fulfil the first object of a good government, namely, the preservation of the public peace.

The Girondistes were persuaded that there was a secret somewhere, a plot between the Courts, and wished to unmask

it, and with this object they tried to form a ministry chosen by themselves who could penetrate into the intrigue and ruin it.

The ambition to rule was at the bottom of this, and besides, they felt the necessity of possessing power in order to oppose the Jacobins and Robespierre who were beginning to make them very anxious. Such are the consequences of the abuse of politics! If one is feared one must also be powerful, in order to protect oneself. One must either triumph or perish!

M. de Lessart, the minister for foreign affairs, was an honest man, but more attached to the old régime than the new. The Girondistes wished to get rid of him, and his correspondence with M. de Noailles, who was the French Ambassador at Vienna, gave them an excuse for doing so. The diplomatic committee, having seen the documents, were loud in their abuse; M. de Noailles, they said, had allowed France to be insulted, he had given in to the contemptuous pride of the Prince de Kaunitz, and M. de Lessart, instead of writing in a dignified tone, which would have been suitable to the occasion, appeared rather to instigate M. de Noailles to further forbearance, and appeared to apologize for the constitution, when as a minister of the King he ought to have spoken strongly in its favour.

M. de Lessart had received orders from the committee to ask for an explanation of some of the phrases used by the Prince de Kaunitz. This explanation was sent, but was far from satisfactory. It was a violent attack on the Jacobin

party, whose excesses were represented as bringing contempt on the majesty of the King, and whose example was a dangerous one for the rest of Europe to follow. This answer, which was thought to have been arranged between M. de Lessart and the King, made him still more unpopular, and set the Jabobins on a pedestal. They now left their position of obscurity and received the attention of Royalty. M. de Lessart, bewildered by the complaints of the committee, thought he would evade the storm by tendering his resignation. But Brissot prepared an act of accusation against him, and M. de Lessart was sent to Orleans to be tried by the National High Court of Justice.

I listened in the committee to the reading of this Act, which contained seventeen or eighteen charges against him; I said nothing at the time, but when I was alone with Brissot and Clavière I represented to them that these complaints were couched in such contradictory and vague terms, that it would be impossible to refute them, that they were insincere and were calculated to produce much bad feeling against the accused, and that such injurious expressions ought not to be employed in a judicial accusation. Indignant as I was at this composition I was made still more so by Brissot's answer; he smiled in a sardonic manner, and seemed amused at my simplicity. "This is a party move," he said; "it is absolutely necessary that de Lessart should be sent to Orleans, otherwise the King, who is much attached to him, will re-instate him in the ministry; we wish to steal a march on the Jacobins, and this accusa-

tion will give us the credit of having done what they wished to do themselves. I know that these complaints are multiplied unnecessarily, but that is inevitable in order to spin out the trial. Garand de Coulon, who is head of the National Court, is a very fussy lawyer who will sift all these questions one after the other at great length, and it will be six months at least before de Lessart will be free. I know he will be acquitted, because we only have suspicions but no proofs, but we shall have gained our object in getting him out of the government."

"Good Lord!" I said, disgusted with his odious levity, "you are steeped in Machiavellism to the depths of your nature; are you the same man who was, I always thought, the enemy of all underhand tricks? Is this really Brissot who is about to persecute an innocent man?"

"But," he answered, somewhat disconcerted by my remarks, "you do not understand the position we are in; de Lessart is ruining us, we must get rid of him at all costs; it is only a temporary measure; I rely on Garand's integrity, but we must save France, and we can only destroy the power of the Austrian cabinet by putting a safe man into foreign affairs. However, I will think over your remarks and will remove the injurious expressions, which you are right in blaming."

From this moment I could no longer look on Brissot with the same respect. I did not quarrel with him, but my friendship with him was weakened by the loss of my esteem. I had known him full of generosity and candour; now he

had become an insidious persecutor! If his conscience ever reproached him (for Brissot was a moral and religious man) he stifled it by pretending that what he had done was necessary for the good of the State.

It is in factious times like these that one appreciates the accuracy of Helvetius's ideas as to what constitutes virtue. Brissot was faithful to his party but faithless to truth. He acted from a feeling of enthusiasm, to which he would have sacrificed himself, and because he was not actuated by pecuniary cupidity or by love of power, he imagined his motives to be pure and virtuous. "Look," he said, "at my modest establishment, my simple fare, which would be worthy of a Spartan, observe my domestic habits, see if you can find any reason to reproach me with any dissipation or frivolity; why, for the last two years I have never even entered a theatre." This was the foundation of his self-confidence. He did not perceive that party zeal and love of power, hatred, pride, etc., are just as corrupting in their influences as the love of money or the taste for pleasure.

The denunciation of de Lessart had all the effect that the Girondistes looked for.

Their power was now self-evident, and every one looked on them as all-powerful. The King, terrified by this, threw himself on their protection. De Graves, the senior member of the King's council, now only dared to act under their advice. They therefore selected Dumouriez, Clavière, Roland, Lacoste, and Duranton for the ministry.

I had known Graves in London, and therefore called

on him at the "Hôtel de la Guerre," where he received me with much cordiality. "When we took a walk together in Kensington Gardens," he said, "we neither of us ever thought I should be in the Government. I have only consented to take this place as a means of acquiring more experience of affairs and of men. I have no ambition; I don't care either for money or for power; I only want to see what I can do as a modest and disinterested man, who has no other object in view than the welfare of the public." I thought him rather long-winded and foolish in dilating so much on his moderation, etc., but he was genuinely astonished at finding himself in such a position, a feeling that was fully shared by his friends.

Nobody was less suited to be a member of such a stormy ministry. His motives were pure and his honesty above reproach; he had no party passions, but he was weak, both in body and mind. He was hard working, but wanting in character and strength of will. Madame Roland alludes to him in her Memoirs with the most unmerited contempt; she only looked on him as a little society wit, a "ministre de toilette"; his amiability, kindness, and politeness seemed all the more absurd at a moment when great qualities were needed. After two months of arduous labour he lost his head, and broke down completely, so much so that he forgot his own name, and when he had to sign, not knowing what to put, wrote down "The Mayor of Paris." This he told me himself. From the moment of our first conversation I longed to be intimate enough with him to advise

him to resign. I was accustomed to Mirabeau's methods, and now I found myself with one whose ways were completely dissimilar. He had been raised to his present position by the Lameths and he could not get on with the Girondistes; he liked the former but feared the latter, but listened to both sides and tried to steer his course between them. When Dumouriez was in the government, he allowed himself to be ruled by him. This was much his safest plan, and nothing better could happen to him than to let him steer the ship. Dumouriez was active enough to be the head of everything.

I must now mention a singular occurrence which shows the inner workings of political matters. I was seriously consulted as to the appointment of the Minister for War. It sounds farcical, but it was the fact. After the Girondistes had appointed their supporters to the ministry, they looked with dislike on Graves, who had been chosen by the "Feuillans." Brissot and his friends knew how intimate I was with Duchâtelet, and asked me seriously if I thought he was capable of filling the post of War Minister, what I thought of his principles and talents, and whether confidence could safely be placed in him. They did not wish to consult Condorcet, because he belonged, so to speak, to the same family. I got out of the difficulty by pretending that Clavière and Brissot were not serious in asking for my opinion. Duchâtelet was much too violent, and De Graves too feeble, but my friendship with both of them put me into a very difficult position. However, I told Duchâtelet that

there was a question of appointing him, and he begged me to save him the necessity of refusing, because he knew that war was shortly going to be declared and he wished to go to the front. In spite of many qualifications, he did not think himself suited for the Cabinet, and he would never have accepted a post for which he did not think himself suitable. But how was it possible for the Girondistes to think of introducing into the King's council a man who had signed the first republican manifesto? When I felt sure of his refusal I pointed this out to them.

At one time I had hoped to be able to arrange a treaty of peace between the "Feuillans" and the "Girondistes," by the interposition of de Graves. They accused each other of trying to revoke the Constitution; one side wished to establish two chambers, the other to create a republic. I was a sort of unimportant mediator between them; I carried messages from one to the other, and tried to arrange a meeting between them, but with no results, for the Girondistes were too much afraid of the Jacobins to have any dealings with them. The Girondistes, now the dominant party in the government, were at this time well disposed towards the King.

I wrote a speech for Gensonné which was well received in committee. It was intended to show attachment to the Constitution, and to point out the danger of factions. It was written with sufficient address to be listened to with attention, in spite of its strong declaration in favour of royalty and its vigorous denunciations of anarchy. But Gensonné's cold and feeble manner was not that of Mirabeau;

nevertheless he was listened to and applauded. The King was very much pleased with it, and I think it was the last monarchical speech that was ever delivered in the Assembly.

I was pleased at having persuaded a party always suspected of republicanism to take a public step in an opposite direction. But it was only a drop of oil on a stormy ocean!

This speech, which was published in the "Moniteur," was mutilated there in a strange way. The conclusion had not been well received by the "Montagne," who feared they had gone too far, and regretted the advances they had made to the Royalist cause.

I used to go to the public dinners at the Mairie given by Pétion, where the Gironde was accustomed to assemble. The conversation was generally directed against the Court. They spoke of the conspiracy of Coblentz, of the Austrian cabinet, of the treachery of the Court; the moderation of the "Feuillans" was more condemned than was the anarchical fury of the Jacobins. Many of the personages whose names I have forgotten were shockingly coarse, and I was surprised to see Condorcet amusing himself in a society so little worthy of him. This was the beginning of the obscene type of *sans-culottisme*, which was soon to disgrace France. Good manners and decency were considered distinctions of the aristocracy, which were to be trampled under foot in order to bring everything down to the level of the *canaille*. The leaders of the Girondistes were of another stamp. Vergniaud was an indolent man who spoke little, but when he became animated his eloquence showed real power.

Guadet had more talent and was more pliable; he was always prepared to speak from the Tribune and to face his opponents. Brissot was continually running about, fussing and wire-pulling; but he had no gift for oratory and produced no effect. Gensonné's character was amiable and gentle; Buzot had a kind of penetrating and persuasive eloquence; De Sers, who was not much known by the public, had much influence on the committees, and was a sensible and moderate man, who often made the others reconsider their hasty resolutions, and he alone had any influence over Brissot. Roederer was a clever man, but very ignorant, and with so much levity in his character that he was only fit to fill a subordinate place.

Condorcet never spoke from the Tribune, and very rarely in conversation. He was called "Le mouton enragé"; he was not a leader, but he carried much weight with the party, though he always appeared to me to be only a well-wisher and adherent. His paper, the "Chronique de Paris," was conducted with great skill. The Court had no greater enemy than he, and his attacks were all the more dangerous because they were made with a calm subtlety which produced far more impression than the most virulent insults of Brissot and the Jacobins. Champfort was brilliant and bitter, his caustic sayings were often quoted in society; anxieties as to the conspiracies taking place at the Tuileries prevented his sleeping. He thought he was on a mine that was always on the point of exploding. Sieyes suffered from the same fears; in his dreams he had visions of his head rolling on

the scaffold. A feeling of common terror induced them all to work together for the destruction of the monarchy, which appeared to them in the light of a fearful phantom. These imaginary terrors may seem ridiculous, but it is none the less true that they brought about the second revolution. People's minds were not in a normal condition; if jealousy gives reality to mere suspicions, party spirit has the same effect on men's minds, creates gloomy visions, in the same way that the brain when disordered by fever sees only livid spectres and deformed monsters.

Four different newspapers, all opposed to the Court Party, were at this time appearing. Their success corresponded in an exactly contrary degree to their merits. The "Chronique de Paris," edited by Condorcet, was cleverly written, but with concealed malice and hidden meanings, and was hardly known except in Paris and abroad. "La Patriote" was Brissot's organ; it did not disguise its violence, but was well written and had a good circulation both in Paris cafés and in the provinces. The "Annales Patriotiques," belonging to Mercier and Cara, by reason of its dull vulgarities, had a great and universal vogue, and was read out loud for general edification at all the clubs. But the "Père Duchêsne," which was a disgrace to France on account of its filthy and infamous style, was the general favourite with the masses. This paper was the one that made the highest bid for popularity. It is as well to point out to those who wish to adopt the career of journalism that the greatest success always attends those who have fewest scruples and least shame.

Roland née Phlipon

MADAME ROLAND

CHAPTER XX

MONSIEUR AND MADAME ROLAND

IT was at this period that I became acquainted with Roland. He was a man of simple habits, serious in his conversation, and rather priggish. But this sort of ostentatious morality, which was so much resented in Necker's case, is in my opinion not a displeasing trait in a public man. I don't like to see a man who appears to be surprised at his own virtue and who admires himself as if he was the Doge of Genoa in the midst of a corrupt generation, but a minister who lays himself out to be a moral man seems to me to be worthily attempting to stem the tide of the debased tone of society. At all events, this pose does not suit everyone, and those who ridicule it are secretly afraid of its effects.

Madame Roland added to her personal charms the merits of wit and character. Her friends spoke of her with respect; she was a Roman Matron, a Cornelia, and if she had possessed sons they would have been brought up like the Gracchi.

I was present at her house at several meetings of the ministers and Girondistes. Amongst all this company a woman seemed rather out of place; but she never joined in

any of the discussions, but generally remained sitting at her writing-table, answering letters, and appeared to be occupied about ordinary matters, but in reality she never missed a word of what was going on. Her quiet attire did not detract from her charms, and though she worked as hard as a man, she had all the attractions of her sex. I reproach myself for not having known more thoroughly the extent of her good qualities. I have always had a prejudice against political women, and I thought she had the defiant disposition which often is joined to ignorance of the ways of the world.

Clavière and Roland, after having seen the King at the council, were converted from their prejudices and believed in his sincerity; but Madame Roland never ceased warning them against the glamour that surrounds a court; she could not believe in the good faith of a prince who had been brought up in the belief that he was superior to all other men, and she repeatedly told them that they were dupes, and all the fine promises that were made appeared to her to be so many snares.

Servan, in spite of his gloomy disposition and jealous pride, appeared to her to be strong and incorruptible. She mistook his violence for fervour, and thought his hatred of the Court was republican virtue. Louvet, who was equally prejudiced, became her hero; he certainly possessed courage, talents and ardour, but it was astonishing that any virtuous woman could consider the author of "Fabulas," that teacher of vice, as a strict republican.

Madame Roland forgave everything to those who declaimed against the Court. She could only appreciate virtue when it was found in a cottage. She idealized very ordinary people, such as Lanthenas and Pâche, merely because they saw things from her point of view. This did not attract me, and prevented me from seeking her society as much as I should have done if I had known her as well while she was still alive as I came to do after death.

Her personal memoirs are admirable; they are imitated from Rousseau's "Confessions," and are often worthy of the original; she opens her heart fully, and depicts herself with a strength and truth which are not to be found in any other work of a similar nature. Her intellectual development needed more knowledge of the world, and a greater acquaintance with men of better judgement than her own. Roland was not broad-minded; none of the society that frequented his wife's salon were free from vulgar prejudices, and she never believed in the possibility of an alliance between the Monarchy and Liberty, and regarded a King with the same horror that she did Madame Macaulai, who she considered was a being outside her sex. If she could have inspired her party with her own strength of mind and intrepidity, royalty would have been destroyed, but the Jacobins would not have triumphed.

Madame Roland, who had a graceful and forcible style, wrote too much, and she induced her husband to do the same. It was the ministry of writers; I have always remarked that if political factions are given to issuing many pamphlets and

writings it invariably weakens their cause. Among such a mob of authors there are always many who irritate and inflame their opponents without gaining any corresponding advantages, and they get accustomed to words more than deeds, and think that discussion takes the place of action.

One good newspaper would have been more useful to the Girondistes than this crowd of scribblers, who were paid by the Minister of the Interior under the pretence of enlightening the nation and of forming public opinion.

The worst fault that has been found with Madame Roland was her having persuaded her husband to publish the confidential letter which he had written to the King and which began as follows: "Sire, this letter will never be seen by any one but you and me." When he was dismissed from the government he could not resist the pleasure of this bit of revenge, and published the letter which contained all his prophetic menaces, without perceiving that they might serve to bring about the events he feared, and that to tell the King of all he had to fear from the people was also to suggest to the people the way in which they might treat the King. Clavière had been made Minister of Finance, and I had the pleasure of seeing him installed in the post he had always desired, and had worked for with such persevering ambition.

It was the climax of all his hopes. For the last ten years he had worked to get into the government, and all his life he had felt a presentiment that he would eventually arrive at this eminence.

When M. Necker was made minister Clavière was only

an ordinary Genevese merchant, but he already allowed his intimate friends to perceive the ambition with which he was filled. He came to Paris in 1780 with Duroverai, and in passing before the house of the minister of Finance, said to his companion, "My instinct tells me that some day I shall live there." He laughed himself at such an unlikely prophecy, and Duroverai thought he was rather mad. Exiled from the Swiss Republic by the King of France, he tried to establish a colony of Genevese in Ireland, but when that failed he came and settled in Paris. Certainly it would not have appeared a possibility that a man who had been sent out of his country by a French minister should one day be invited to become a member of that government, but men of enterprise accomplish what to others would appear to be impossible. Clavière wrote on all questions of finance, and was the author of nearly all the financial parts of Mirabeau's works.

The confusion and disorder prevailing in the administration made him foresee the calamities of the future, in which he thought he would very likely be much needed. His active brain had formed a plan of buying a large piece of territory in America and founding a colony there on the most liberal lines. He sent Brissot to reconnoitre the country, but on his return France was in such a condition that he gave up the undertaking, as he saw that the liberty he had meant to establish in America, France was now quite prepared to receive herself. Throughout the duration of the National Assembly he attached himself to Mirabeau, whose influence he foresaw, in order to upset M. Necker, and to

take his place. But he had made many enemies, particularly amongst the stock-jobbing and commercial classes. He was the originator of the "Assignats" and wrote many pamphlets and articles on this subject.

Necker did not fall from his place, he only slid down a gradual decline, and his departure was as clandestine as his return had been triumphant; but Mirabeau's influence was not sufficient to procure Clavière's appointment in his place. It was Brissot whom Mirabeau had so much despised who by his influence with the Girondistes was the means of raising his friend into the ministry. The King, who knew his history and had not forgotten that he had expatriated him, looked on him with suspicion. At first he showed him neither favour nor prejudice. Afterwards he appeared to be pleased to see him and worked with him not only without repugnance, but with interest. At Geneva, Clavière had been one of the leaders of the popular party, but he was thought to be sly and cunning; nothing was further from the truth. He was a man of much talent; having been deaf in early youth and thus deprived of the pleasures of society, he found compensation in study. In his self-education he combined politics and moral philosophy with a knowledge of commerce. He was timid by temperament and had no personal courage, and yet all his life he was placed in positions which required an intrepid character. It seemed as if his mind and constitution were always at variance with each other, and he was continually attacking authority although the danger of doing so caused him much alarm.

One might say of him what Madame de Flahaut said of Sieyes, that "he was the most enterprising coward in the world."

He enjoyed finding himself in the midst of difficult and anxious situations, though he feared the consequences. He said that if political disputes do harm, they also do much good, and put everybody in a more agreeable temper than would be the case if they always existed in a condition of insipid repose. He even defended anarchy with many ingenious sophisms. His activity was enormous; he rose in the middle of the night and wrote fifty pages, then rested for an hour before setting to work again. His style was diffuse, and he showed traces of his elementary education. In spite of his republican ideas, he was fond of luxury and display; there was much contrast between the elegance of his taste and the austerity of his principles, but he never gratified his tastes at the expense of the public, and in pecuniary matters was above reproach. His elevation to office had an effect on him which showed he was not made of common stuff; he became all the more modest, though he had never previously been conceited or presumptuous. His new dignity only increased his amiability and simplicity. In this he was very different from Brissot, whose head was nearly turned by the importance of his position, and who spoke as if he were an oracle, and could not bear any contradiction. Clavière found his office in excellent order; it had been arranged on a new plan with infinite trouble by his predecessor, Tarbé, and he gave him so much credit for

this that one might almost have thought he regretted him. This trait shows that there was no pettiness in his nature. Clavière said that it was very expensive to employ the aristocracy so much, because they were paid according to their rank and not for what they did. "It is," he said, "as if you employed a Dutch florist to grow potatoes."

Clavière possessed every domestic virtue, and his society became all the more agreeable to his friends after he had attained the summit of his ambitions. He was naturally quick-tempered, and was not free from a sort of *brusquerie*, but this was not caused by pride. He had the peevishness of a child, who sulks but soon recovers his good temper.

He thought the King's intentions were pure, and expressed his opinion openly. I heard many disputes on this subject, and remember one in particular which took place at Roland's house, where were assembled several of the Girondin deputies. Clavière related that the King had found out that he was ignorant on a constitutional point, that he drew a book from his pocket and said to him, laughing about it, "You see, M. Clavière, I know better than you." Clavière said that the King was justified in saying this. Brissot, however, was angry and sarcastic, and finally abusive about it. The conversation became very bitter, and I saw that the moment was coming when they would quarrel. Clavière appealed to Roland, who did not dare to take either side, and feared it would be thought weak if he showed common justice towards a King of whom he was the minister. I went to Madame Roland, who was sitting

at her table pretending to write, and found that she was pale and trembling; I begged her to interfere in order to calm the storm. "Do you think I can?" she said in a hesitating way, but soon with much tact and gentleness she changed the conversation and prolonged it sufficiently to give the two friends time to soften towards each other.

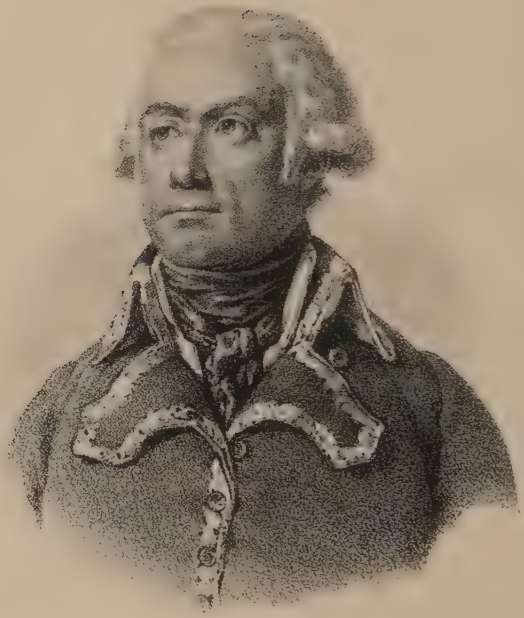
Madame Clavière would have liked to play the same part as Madame Roland did, but vanity was her only characteristic, whereas Madame Roland was full of energy and talent. In Madame Clavière's case a miracle was wrought by the power of the royal sceptre; she was dying of a nervous fever when her husband was nominated to the ministry; there was scarcely a hope of saving her, but the doctor said, "I will undertake to say that in four days' time she will leave her bed and take her place at the Hôtel des Contributions (the official residence). His prediction was verified; the joy and novelty of her position worked a cure where other remedies had failed.

It is easy enough to describe characters in a way that will satisfy one's readers, but in order to please one's self, there is nothing more difficult than to give a truthful account of those one has known best. Human nature is such a medley of good and evil, motives are so obscure, the character of every individual is so complicated, that an incommunicable something always escapes one, and it is impossible to convey to others all that one feels one's self.

I now very seldom went to the Assembly—there was no Mirabeau there! though each party possessed distinguished

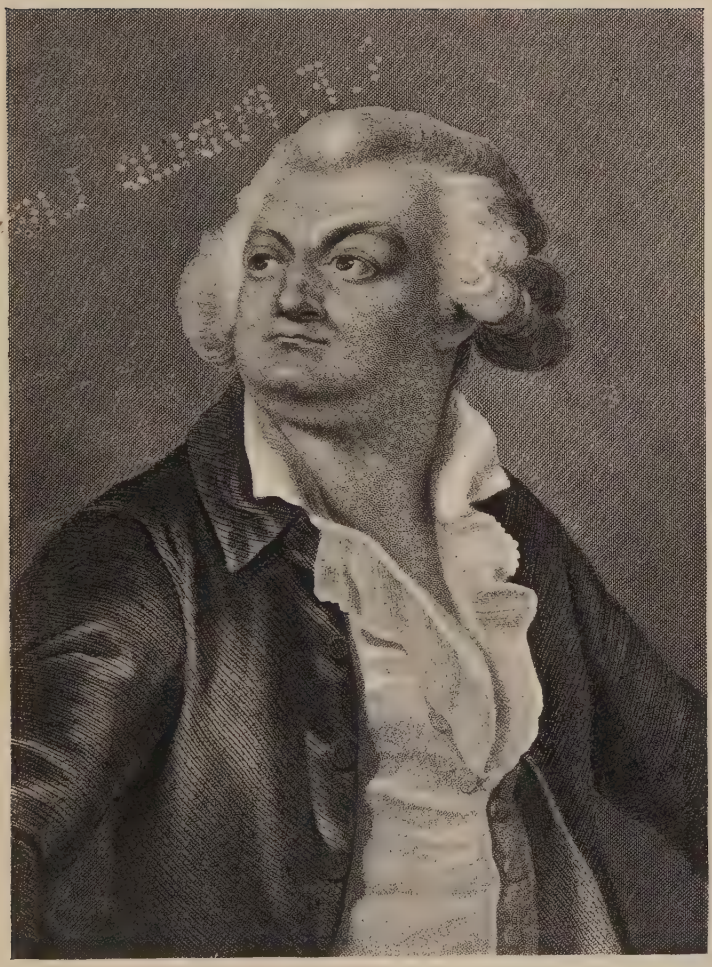
orators. Amongst the Girondistes, Guadet was distinguished for doing the right thing at the right time, Gensonné, for his subtlety and artifice, Vergniaud only appeared on great occasions when he abandoned his habitual indolence and launched out in sudden bursts of wild and fiery eloquence.

The Girondistes present two different points of view. As the declared enemies of the King and the Constitution they may be the subject of legitimate reproach, but as the enemies of the Jacobins and Robespierre, one can only regret that their destruction gave France over to the most dreadful misfortunes. As citizens of a monarchy they were certainly guilty; as republicans they had many virtues, and if the historian is compelled to condemn them before the 10th of August, he must by comparison esteem them after that date, and at the same time deplore both their rise and their fall.



Dumouriez

GENERAL DUMOURIEZ



MIRABEAU

CHAPTER XXI

THE WAR WITH AUSTRIA

BRISSOT was in favour of the war with Austria. He had been talking of it for a long time. The Austrian Committee preyed on his mind, and an open hostility appeared to him to be preferable to continuing in this state of intrigue and concealment. The Court of Vienna gave plenty of pretexts for war, and yet had not determined on it. I still think that with firmness and moderation the storm might have been avoided. The Constitution was a sort of unknown quantity, a new creation of which everyone was afraid; it required to be treated with caution in order to be respected and excused, for the violence of the Jacobins make it often appear odious. If the Girondistes had been willing to conciliate the King, they would have disarmed the suspicions of Europe, and would have placed the emigrants in a ridiculous position, and peace might have been maintained. The other powers were not united, nor were they anxious to act in concert with each other, so that if tact had been used, there would have been little to fear. This was the opinion of the moderate party, and I think they were right, but Brissot

and Dumouriez did not agree. Brissot was so violent that I heard him propose to disguise a party of soldiers as Austrian Uhlans and make them attack some French villages by night, so that at the news the Assembly should pass a decree for immediate war. If I had not heard this proposal I could not have believed it possible.

Dumouriez was less impetuous, but cleverer. He also desired war, but he thought there was reason enough in the conduct of the Austrians to justify it. A very imprudent answer from the Viennese Court gave him plenty of excuse, but I am sure that all his colleagues were not of his opinion. One day, after they had been dining at the War Office, I went there about six o'clock to know what had been decided. Dumouriez had left, the table was covered with maps of the Low Countries; he had been explaining his plan of campaign. They all appeared very serious and embarrassed. De Graves was afraid of the immensity of the task, Roland and Clavière were neither of them warlike, and Roland would have been in favour of negotiations and would have risked nothing. Clavière knew the financial difficulties, and was aware that there were no available funds, no credit, that the taxes were in arrears and the collection of them difficult. Brissot's joy was complete; he affirmed that the war would be the means of unmasking the perfidies of the Court and of putting the cause of liberty on a sure foundation, by proving who were the friends and who the enemies of the Constitution. De Graves saw the danger which threatened the

army, as many of the best officers had emigrated. However, no one dared oppose the will of Dumouriez, he carried everyone with him. He represented the necessity of baffling the plans of the allied Austrian and European houses, and of preventing their having the time to arrange their measures. The two parties were equally active. I remember that Duchâtelet, who was much in favour of the war, argued that the emigration of the superior officers would not be a disadvantage, as the subalterns were more competent than the older men. "There is," he said, "the same difference between them as between amateurs and artists. Supposing all the former officers left us, we should be none the worse; there would be more emulation in the army, and generals would be discovered amongst the common soldiers."

As I was in the habit of dining with Clavière, Roland and de Graves, I had become intimate with Dumouriez. These dinners were often remarkable for their gaiety, a quality which under no circumstance will ever be wanting to French society, and which is natural to men who are pleased with themselves and their position. The future was concealed from them, they forgot the cares of government, and settled down in their offices as if they were to remain in them for ever. Madame Roland was the only one who appeared doubtful as to the future; she said, as she looked at the gilt decorations of the apartments, that she felt she was living in a luxurious hotel. The conversation of Louvet and Dumouriez in particular was full of

charm. Dumouriez's liveliness was of a thoughtless character, and one would have expected more steadiness from his age and position. He found himself thrown amongst a society of pedants, and was bored with their strict republican virtues; there was no sympathy between them, but he knew how to avoid discussion, and often one of his humorous repartees prevented or ended the disputes. He possessed ready wit, a discerning glance, and prompt decision. His good sayings were often quoted. He managed to amuse the King at the same time as he transacted business with him, but in the midst of all his jests he pursued his own course, and took the leading part in the council.

One day he asked me to breakfast, in order to read to me the celebrated memorandum written for the King's Council and for the Assembly, in which he had enumerated the charges made against the House of Austria by France. This memorandum, which he dictated in the midst of interruptions, was written in a very incorrect style, and he wanted me to read it with him solely with the view of criticising it; but by his frequent digressions, I easily perceived his hatred of the Prince of Kaunitz, and the pleasure he would have in humiliating him. "Now," he said, "the service I am asking you to do me is to write a speech that can be a fitting one to come from the lips of the King. I do not profess to understand how to write this in a dignified and suitable style."

"I will consent," I said, "if the speech is not calculated to produce war, and if your object is simply to ask the

Assembly to authorize the King to declare war in case he does not obtain satisfactory explanations from the Emperor." "This," he said, "can only be decided on in the Cabinet. Write the speech, make the charges, and we will do the rest."

I related the affair to Duroverai, and prepared the speech, of which I have not kept a copy, but its substance was that the King, after having explained to his subjects his legitimate causes of complaint, asked for authority to declare war on the King of Bohemia and Hungary if he would not agree to stop the assembling together of the emigrants, and did not give satisfactory explanations of other causes of complaint. When I saw Dumouriez, he told me that the Cabinet had agreed to an immediate war, that they intended to attack the Low Countries at once, before they could be put in a state of defence; that the speech I had prepared had been read to the King, but that he thought it too long, and that he had composed another one himself, which he thought was more suitable to the occasion.

Everyone knows how the legislative Assembly in its wisdom took four hours of its time in order to consider, at its leisure and with its best attention, this proposal of war, and how, after a single evening's sitting, and having listened to one or two members only, they launched forth the decree which plunged France and the whole of Europe into a gulf of misery.

One might say that Brissot and Dumouriez were only the mouthpieces of the national will, because there were

only seven votes against the war, but it appears certain to me that if they had adopted a more dilatory method, they would have been received with absolute unanimity. All minds were wavering, and they were all finally led by the will of the Cabinet. I knew many men of influence who only the day before had been trembling at the idea of war, suddenly become convinced of its necessity. Condorcet did not wish for it, but he voted in its favour; Clavière did not want it, he also did the same, Roland likewise, and de Graves, and many others. When the leaders of a party decide in favour of any measure, it is inconceivable how quickly they carry other people's opinions with them.

But I have been forgetting my travelling companions, and it is time for me to return to them; Duroverai had fallen ill a few days after his return, and was confined to his bed for nearly a month; M. de Talleyrand had re-entered the whirlpool of society, and I saw him but seldom. After Dumouriez had been appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Girondins pressed him to send an ambassador to England and to choose some one who would inspire confidence. They were very anxious to prevent England's taking any part in the war, and wished to re-establish the friendly relations between the two countries, which had cooled down owing to the fatal events of the Revolution. Talleyrand appeared to be the most capable man for the post, but the Girondins looked on him with suspicion, though it was some compensation to know that he no longer belonged to the Court party. Unfortunately the

law did not allow him to accept a post on the nomination of the King, and for a long time it seemed impossible to get over this difficulty; at last a means was found of doing so; this was to give the title of Ambassador to some one who would esteem it an honour but who would consent to let himself be governed by Talleyrand. Chauvelin, who was very young and who had devoted all his energies to the Revolution, was designated by Sieyes for the place, which was a higher one than he had ever hoped to attain to, and he therefore consented to accept it. The Girondins, by way of extra precaution, wished to appoint Duroverai as Counsellor of Legation, but there were some difficulties in the way. He had the great advantage of knowing England well, and as he had been naturalized in Ireland, and was even in receipt of an Irish pension, he might be supposed to be more interested in the English government than in that of France, and it was evident that if he accepted the post, his influence would be essentially a pacific one, and his only object the knitting together of the two nations.

But his having been naturalized, and the fact of his pension, made the difficulty of giving him the title of Counsellor insuperable. It was necessary, therefore, to give him the place without the name. Talleyrand was very anxious to have him as a colleague, as he recognized how useful his advice would be. In order, therefore, to accredit him in an indirect way, he was recommended in a letter from the French Minister to Lord Grenville. All these arrange-

ments caused many delays, and the public began to complain that the embassy to England was very slow in getting ready for its departure. At the last moment, Chauvelin was seized with scruples. He perceived that he was only to be in receipt of the title of Ambassador without having any of the real power, and that he would be in the position of a young envoy to a foreign court accompanied by two governors. This rôle seemed a humiliating one to him, and he refused to leave. Talleyrand in vain exhausted his powers of persuasion without any success, but Duroverai succeeded better. He made him understand that his nomination as Ambassador placed him at once in the first rank of diplomacy, to which he could not have attained, in the ordinary course of things, for many years. Dumouriez lost all patience at these delays, and begged me to come and see him. "I cannot understand," he said, "the meaning of your friends' conduct; for the last fifteen days the Embassy has been appointed, and yet they do not think of starting. M. de Talleyrand is amusing himself, M. de Chauvelin is sulking, M. Duroverai bargaining. I must beg you to tell them that if they are not on the road by to-morrow another embassy will be appointed and will start the day after to-morrow at midday. This is my decision."

I rushed off to find them all, but it was some hours before I got them together. They understood that Dumouriez was a man of his word, that he had a relation for whom he was anxious to find an appointment, and that they owed their

nominations to Clavière and the Girondistes; therefore they very soon arranged their departure.

The whole of the Legation left Paris the next day at four o'clock in the morning, travelling in two carriages. We had with us, besides the afore-named, Garat and Reynhart. We often changed places in the carriages in order to vary our company, and the journey proceeded with much cheerfulness. When Chauvelin's pride was at rest, he was quite amiable. How many interesting anecdotes were told! But I never wrote them down, and only thought of enjoying the pleasant company and the fine weather.

I thought Garat full of kindness and simplicity, which is more than I should have expected from one who had lived in the centre of a society of literary wits, a "milieu" which, as a rule, is not favourable to the production of much warmth of heart.

Literature, which for the last two or three years had been forgotten in Paris, was often the subject of our discourse. Garat's conversation, though not profound, was brilliant and charming. After being for so long confined in Paris in the midst of the sad scenes of the Revolution, and engaged in the work of the ministry, he was delighted at finding himself free and at leisure, and took much pleasure at the thought of seeing England, a country which he had always admired but had never visited. M. de Talleyrand said that he was like a schoolboy beginning his holidays. As soon as we arrived at Dover Garat and I mounted the imperial, he

put on his spectacles and surveyed the scene with as much curiosity as if we had just landed on the moon.

He made the most amusing remarks on all the little cottages and their tiny gardens, on the general cleanliness that prevailed, on the beauty of the children, and the modest appearance of the country women, and on the tidy clothes of the inhabitants of the villages. This scene of prosperity, which contrasted so strongly with the misery and rags of the Picardy peasants, struck him very forcibly.

I was proud to do the honours of the country, and almost persuaded myself that I was also viewing the scene for the first time, so much did the pleasure of seeing him admire them increase the impression they made on me.

"Ah!" he said, "what a pity! what a pity! if this beautiful country is also to be revolutionized. When will France be as happy as England?" Everything excited his enthusiasm, but it all evaporated in talk.

Though I frequently saw Garat after our arrival in England, and lived a good deal in his company, I never became very intimate with him. There was some want of sympathy between us; he amused but did not interest me. He was contemplating writing a history of the Revolution, and he seemed only to look upon this event as so much material for his work. "What do you think Garat thinks of the affair of the 10th of August?" said M. de Talleyrand. "He only sees in it an occasion for a page for his history."

After he had taken part in the revolutionary scenes, when as Minister of Justice he exposed himself to general blame,

I am persuaded that his heart bled at the thought of all the evil with which he had been associated. He lacked courage, was weak and vain, and had the boldness to undertake a task that was beyond his powers. There are some men whom one hates for the evil that they do, and others whom one pities for the evil to which they lend themselves. What he could never justify was the sort of apology he made for the assassinations of the 2nd of September. No lightness of character could ever excuse such an act of feebleness. It was thought possible at that time to soften the monsters who ordered the massacre by minimizing their cruelty and in absolving them for their past sins, in order to give them a lesson in humanity for the future. "Do not give yourselves up to barbarism out of despair" was said to them. "We are disposed to trust you, and to believe you innocent, so that you should not plunge into fresh crimes."

This embassy, whose only object in view was to bring about a good understanding with England, was very coldly received by the Court, and almost insultingly so by the people. Chauvelin was abused in several newspapers, and was even accused of having entered Versailles on the 6th of October disguised as a fishwife.

One circumstance that was damaging to the embassy was the ill-advised zeal of Perry, the editor of the "Morning Chronicle." He thought to be of use to the French by speaking in the most pompous and extravagant terms of all the members of the suite, by implying that never had such a collection of distinguished men been brought

together before. The simple truth being that M. de Talleyrand liked having clever people about him, and had therefore selected a few to keep him company during his stay in England. But the excessive political influence attributed to them by Perry, excited the suspicions and mistrust of a large portion of the public, who imagined that the object of all these distinguished gentlemen was to propagate revolutionary opinions in England, and they were therefore looked on as apostles sent on a proselytizing mission.

Chauvelin was shortly made aware of the coolness with which he was regarded by the Court. One day, Pitt, in a marked manner, stood between him and the King, purposely turning his back on him the while. Chauvelin was annoyed at this, and trod heavily on his foot in a manner which caused him to move out of the way.

The Embassy consulted Romilly as to the best methods of dealing with the numerous damaging paragraphs that appeared in the ministerial papers in every malignant form of which they were capable, and for which they were given the cue by those in authority. He wrote out a strong and formal denial of all the calumnies imputed to them, and defied any one to prove that they had in any way propagated revolutionary principles, and threatened to prosecute the author of these libels. But this declaration was never printed. Lord Lansdowne advised them to treat the attacks with contempt. It was a mistake on their part, however, to profit as much as they did by the advances made to them by the Opposition. They were never seen

except in the society of Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, and this was a still further cause of quarrel between them and the ministerial party.

I remember that during the fine weather after our arrival in London, it was the fashion to spend the evenings at Ranelagh, and one day, after I had dined with Chauvelin, it was proposed that we should all go and finish the evening in this general rendezvous. It consisted of a round hall with an orchestra playing in the centre, and opening out of it were small boxes like those in a theatre. It is the custom to walk round and to stop occasionally to partake of refreshments in these boxes. On our arrival we heard all around us a hum of voices repeating, "Here is the French Embassy." Curious but far from friendly glances followed our battalion, for we were a party of eight or ten, and soon we saw that we should have the whole place to ourselves, for at our approach there was a general scattering of the company as if they feared to find contagion in our vicinity. The battalion became all the more remarkable when it found itself alone in the middle of an empty space. One or two venturesome people bowed to M. Chauvelin or to M. de Talleyrand; a moment afterwards we saw a solitary figure wandering about who was also shunned, though for other causes: it was the Duc d'Orleans, from whom every one was flying with the greatest haste. At last we were so much annoyed at being the objects of such disagreeable attentions, that we separated, and I lost myself in the crowd, and soon afterwards retired from the scene. I ob-

served that M. de Talleyrand was in no way affected or disconcerted by this episode, but that M. Chauvelin was, on the contrary, much put out by it.

Garat was not idle during the time he was in England; he wrote a refutation of a manifesto which had been published by the Low Countries against France. In this composition he tried to justify the Revolution, and explained away all the violences by which it had been accompanied as "Regrettable incidents."

All this time the factious opposition to the Court was becoming stronger every day. The Girondistes attacked it covertly, the Jacobins openly and with force. The first events of the war were unsuccessful, and these misfortunes were attributed to the treachery of the executive government. On the 13th of June Roland, Clavière, and Servan were dismissed from the ministry; on the 20th the Tuileries was invaded, the King threatened, insulted in his own palace, and twenty days later, on the 10th of August, this same palace was captured by assault by the Marseillais.

This invasion of the 10th of August was one of the marked occasions on which, if the King could have suddenly changed his nature and assumed the firmness in which he was always lacking, he might still have regained his throne and destroyed the powers of anarchy.

The mass of the French people were tired of the excesses of the Jacobins, and the outrage of the 20th of June excited general indignation. If he had acted vigorously, and opposed force by force, he might have profited by a victory,

which was almost a certainty, in order to treat the Jacobins and Girondistes as enemies who had repeatedly violated the constitution. He might have closed the Jacobin and Cordelier clubs, have dissolved the Assembly, and arrested the mutineers, and would at once by doing this have regained his authority; but this feeble prince, without considering that his own and his people's welfare were bound together, preferred to expose himself to certain death rather than to give the orders for his own defence.

M. de Talleyrand was in Paris during these events; he had left London a few weeks previously, and had asked me to accompany him, but this time I had the good sense to refuse to undertake a journey which would have been without any special object for me, and would have given me the appearance of being mixed up in intrigues. I was no longer a sufficiently unknown personage to be able to gratify my itinerant and inquiring disposition. I had afterwards much reason to congratulate myself on my discretion, and could contemplate from a peaceful spot the storm in which I should have been immersed.

M. de Talleyrand had to use all his dexterity to obtain a passport from Danton to permit him to return to London immediately after the 10th of August. If he had remained in Paris for even a few days longer he would have been engulfed in the destruction of the Constitutional party, whose heads were now beginning to fall under the axe of the Revolution.

APPENDIX

ADDRESS TO THE KING

BEGGING HIM TO WITHDRAW THE TROOPS

SIRE,—You have invited the National Assembly to give you its confidence; this surpasses their fondest hopes. We therefore come to confide in your Majesty our great fears; if they concerned ourselves alone your goodness would deign to reassure us, and even if you blamed us for doubting your intentions, you would feel for our anxieties, you would dissipate their origin, and you would not leave the position of the National Assembly open to doubt.

But, Sire, we do not crave your protection, that would be offending your sense of justice; we have our fears, and we venture to say that they arise from the purest patriotism, that they are connected with the interests of our constituents, with the public peace, and with the happiness of our beloved Monarch, who by smoothing for us the road to happiness deserves himself to pursue the same without impediment.

In the generous feelings of your heart, Sire, may be found real salvation for the French people. When the troops arrived from all parts and camped around us, investing the Capital, we asked ourselves with astonishment, "Does the King doubt the fidelity of his

People? If this had been the case, would he not have confided in us his fatherly sorrow? What is the meaning of this threatening display? Where are the enemies of the state and throne who are to be subdued? Where are the rebels and plotters that have to be kept down?" A unanimous cry comes from the capital, nay from the whole kingdom, "We value our King, and we return thanks to Providence for the gift of his love."

Sire, your Majesty's goodness can only be taken advantage of under a false pretext of benefiting the public. If those who thus advised our King had shown enough confidence in their own principles to explain them to us, that moment would have brought the greatest triumph of truth. The State has nothing to fear except from bad counsels, which may even dare to besiege the throne itself, and which do not even respect the confidence of the purest and most virtuous of princes. How is it possible, Sire, to make you doubt the love and attachment of your subjects? Have you ever spilled their blood? Are you cruel or implacable? Have you betrayed the cause of justice? Do the people blame you for their misfortune, or name you as the cause of their calamities? Has anyone ever told you that the people are impatient under their yoke, that they are tired of the Bourbon sway? No, no, they cannot have done so, but such a calumny is not to be treated lightly, for it must at least have some slight reason for the blackness of its suspicions.

Your Majesty has recently seen how your subjects have quieted down after the recent agitations, how the prisoners, released by the multitude, resumed their fetters of their own accord, and how the public peace which, if it had been broken by the employment of force, would have shed torrents of blood, was restored by one word from you. But this word was one of peace; it came straight from your heart, and your subjects feel proud that they have never opposed you. It is noble to rule by such means; this

was the empire possessed by Louis IX., Louis XII., and Henry IV., and is the only one which is worthy of you.

We should deceive you, Sire, if we did not tell you that this is the only empire that it will be possible to establish in France. She will never allow the best of Kings to be deceived or made to swerve from the noble plan which he has traced for himself. You have summoned us to settle in concert with you the constitution in order to bring about the reform of the kingdom. The National Assembly declares that your wishes will be accomplished, that your promises will not be made in vain, that neither difficulties, terrors nor snares will retard its progress nor intimidate its courage.

Our opponents will say, "In what manner does the presence of the troops constitute a danger? Why should the Assembly complain, as they are incapable of cowardice?"

Sire, the danger is pressing, is universal, is beyond all calculations of human foresight. The danger threatens the provinces. Once they became alarmed as to our freedom we know of no curb that will hold them. Distance exaggerates everything, it doubles all anxieties, embitters and envenoms them.

The danger threatens the capital.

How will the People, already immersed in poverty and tormented by the most cruel anxieties, bear to divide what remains for its subsistence amongst a crowd of threatening soldiery? The presence of the troops will produce a general excitement and disturbance, and the first act of violence committed under the pretext of keeping order may be the commencement of a series of horrible misfortunes.

Danger threatens the troops. French soldiers, drawn closer to the centre of these discussions and sharing the passions as well as the interests of the people, may forget that they have enlisted as soldiers and may remember that Nature has made them Men.

Danger, Sire, threatens our labours, which are our first duty,

and which can only succeed and be lasting as long as the people consider them to be unfettered. Besides this there is contagion in all excitement. We are but men; the mistrust of ourselves, the fear to appear weak may drag us beyond our aim, we may be governed by violent and unreasoning counsels; calm and cool wisdom do not deliver their oracles in the midst of tumults, disorders and quarrels.

Sire, the danger is still more terrible, and you may judge of its extent by the fear that causes us to appear before you. Great revolutions have arisen from smaller causes. Many national events have proved fatal that began in a less formidable and sinister manner. Do not believe those who speak lightly about the nation and who only represent it according to their own views, sometimes as insolent, rebellious and seditious; sometimes as submissive, docile, and ready to bow the head to the yoke. Both representations are equally misleading.

Sire, we are always ready to obey you because you rule us in the name of Justice; our fidelity is beyond all limit as it is without suspicion.

Ready as we are to resist all the arbitrary commands of those who abuse your authority because they are the enemies of law, our fidelity to you is the cause of our resistance, and we are proud to deserve the reproaches that our firmness draws upon us.

Sire, we implore you in the name of the country, in the name of your happiness, and of your glory, send back your soidiers to their posts from whence your counsellors have dragged them. Send back the artillery, which is only intended to defend your frontiers; above all send away those foreign troops, those mercenaries whom we pay to defend but not to trouble our hearths.

Your Majesty does not need them. How can a Monarch who is adored by twenty millions of Frenchmen surround his throne at great cost with a few thousand foreigners?

Sire, in the midst of your children be guarded by their love. The deputies of the nation are elected in order to consecrate with your help the rights of Royalty, which are founded on the immutable base of the liberties of the people; but when they fulfil their duty, when they yield to their reason and their feelings, would you then expose them to the suspicion of having only yielded to fear? Ah! the authority which all hearts yield willingly to you is one which can be trusted, the only one which is without blemish, it is the just return for all your favours, and the immortal appanage of princes, for whom you will be the example.

ADDRESS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO ITS CONSTITUENTS

GENTLEMEN,

The Deputies that you sent to the States General were for a long time kept in a state of distressing inaction, the motives for which, however, met with your approval. They have now taken action by the only methods which appeared to be compatible with your interests and rights.

The majority of the clergy declare themselves in favour of reunion, an influential minority of the nobles manifested the same desire, and everything in France pointed to the dawning of an epoch of happiness for its constitution. Events, of which you are aware, have retarded this re-union, and have given the aristocracy the courage to persevere in holding by a separation, the danger of which they will soon perceive.

A panic has been too easily created, the capital is in a state of consternation, the place in which we are at this moment has experienced such agitation, that we were obliged to take precautions that were thought necessary but which were nevertheless alarming;

it is evidently our duty to be prepared for disasters and tumults, which may at any moment be the result of the present extraordinary and anxious situation.

"The re-assembling of the States General after such a long interval, the disorders which preceded its meeting, the object of its labours, so unlike those for which your ancestors were assembled,"[1] the claims advanced by the nobles, their attachment to barbarous Gothic laws, and above all the extraordinary methods which were used in order to procure the intervention of the King; these and other causes have stirred up every one's emotions, and the state of ferment in which the kingdom is now is such, that we venture to say, that those who wish to use violence when each day shows that still greater discretion is required, will render themselves not only unworthy of the name of Frenchmen, but will deserve to be considered as incendiaries.

For all these reasons, Gentlemen, we think we ought to put before you our true position, in order to warn you against all exaggerations and fears, which a mistaken zeal or guilty intentions could represent as now prevailing.

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It could only be amongst a sordid and corrupt class that our enemies would attempt to excite tumults and revolts which would embarrass and retard public affairs.

"These," they would say, "are the fruits of liberty, this is Democracy," they would have no shame in representing the People as a flock of madmen whom it was necessary to load with chains. They would pretend to ignore that this same "People," always calm and well behaved, when they are in possession of their freedom, are only violent and unruly under governments where they are purposely degraded, in order that there may be some justification for treating them with contempt.

[1] Quotation from the King's Speech.

There are many cruel men who are indifferent to the fate of the people and cause the events of which the consequence is infallibly to augment the power of the Government.

Authority when preceded by terror is always followed by slavery. Ah! how fatal to the cause of Liberty are those who think they can attain it by disturbances and revolts. Do they not see that they make it necessary to redouble the precautions which fetter the people, that they give a pretext to calumny, that they alarm the weaker spirits, and encourage those who have nothing to lose, are at first their friends, in order to become afterwards their most dangerous enemies.

Gentlemen, the number of our enemies is much exaggerated. Many who do not think as we do, are, however, far from deserving this odious title. To give expression to a sentiment is often the cause of its accomplishment, and if hatreds are too easily imagined, real enmities are often the result.

Our fellow citizens who like us are only wishing for the welfare of the public, but who are pursuing it by different channels, men who are led away by the prejudices of their upbringing and the habits of their childhood, have not strength to resist the torrent. Men, who finding us in a new position, have dreaded that our claims would be unjust, have been alarmed as to the safety of their property, have feared that Liberty was only a pretext for license; all these men deserve our consideration. We may pity some of them, and give others the time to discover their errors and try to enlighten them, and not let our differences degenerate into jealous quarrels or factious disputes.

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How glorious it would be for France and for us if this great Revolution is accomplished without costing humanity either crimes or tears!

The smallest states have often achieved the semblance of

Liberty at the cost of much precious blood. One nation, proud of the virtues of its constitution and scorning the vices of ours, suffered a generation of upheaval and civil war before it was able to enforce its laws. Even America, taught by the talents of others, and rewarded by a freedom which is the work of our hands, has only enjoyed these inestimable benefits after bloody reverses and long and doubtful combats. But, Gentlemen, we hope to see the same changes effected solely by the operation of patriotism and enlightenment. Our battles will only be those of words, our enemies will only be so on account of prejudices, which we shall forgive, our victories will not be those of cruelty, our triumphs will receive the blessing of those who will be our latest converts.

History has but too often recorded the deeds of wild beasts, amongst whom from time to time one could distinguish a few heroes. Let us hope that we are beginning to make the history of men, of brothers, who born to make each other mutually happy, agree together, even in their differences, for their aims will be identical, even if the means they employ vary.

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If we consider all the good that will result to twenty-five millions of men from the establishment of a legal constitution in place of a capricious government; if the gathering together of all the intelligence and enlightenment will enable us to perfect our laws, to reform abuses, to reduce taxes, and to establish economy in our finances and order in our tribunals, to abolish the despotic regulations that cripple our industries and mutilate all human enterprise; if, in one word, we establish the great system of Liberty, which while founded on the basis of freely elected municipalities, rises gradually to the administration of the provinces, and attains its perfection in the annual meeting of the States General; if we consider all the advantages which will result from this restoration of the Liberties of this vast empire, we shall feel that the greatest

of crimes, the blackest treachery to humanity would be to oppose the future exalted destiny of our nation, and to re-plunge it into the abysmal depths, to keep it there, pressed down by the burden of all its chains.

But this misfortune could only be the result of the numerous calamities which always accompany quarrels, lawlessness, and all the base and dismal abominations of a civil war.

Our fate will depend on our wisdom.

The establishment of Liberty which reason will assure to us can only be rendered doubtful or even destroyed by the use of violence.

These, Gentlemen, are our sentiments, which it is a duty we owe to ourselves to place before you. It is important that we should prove to you that in our pursuit of a great patriotic design, we do not swerve from the right means of attaining it.

Such as we have shown ourselves from the first moment when you confided to us your highest interests, such we shall always remain, resolved in our determination to work in concert with our King not only for temporary benefits, but for the established constitution of the Kingdom, determined to see eventually our fellow citizens of all classes in the enjoyment of the innumerable advantages which are assured to us both by nature and by Liberty, to alleviate the sufferings of the peasants, to esteem nothing of such importance as the Law, which while it is equal for every one, will be the common safeguard of all; to labour for peace, but not to be willing to purchase it by the sacrifice of the People's Rights; finally, desiring as the sole reward of our labours to see all the children of this immense country, united by the same sentiments, happy in the same prosperity, and united in the same love for the fatherly ruler whose reign will be the epoch for the regeneration of France.

LETTERS

1

J'apprends Mon cher Dumont avec chagrin pour vous, pour moi et surtout pour la motion que n'ayant été que suspendu et non ajournèe, elle revient demain, je vous conjure de vous lever de bonne heure, de faire un effort de héroisme (?) et d'amitié et d'arrêter dumoins les [*illegible*] de la réponse, vous m'obligerez profondément et ce qui est plus, vous ferez je crois une très bonne œuvre.

Voulez vous bien dire à M. Du Roveray de Londres que M. De la Marck le prie d'être chez lui demain matin a 8 heures.

(*Translation*)

I hear with much regret, my dear Dumont, both for myself, for you and above all for the motion, that having only been suspended, and not adjourned, it will turn up again to-morrow. I implore you to make a neighbourly and friendly effort and to get up early, in order to draw up at least the headings of the answers, and besides obliging me enormously you will also do a most excellent work.

Be so good as to tell M. Du Roverai of London that M. De la Marck begs him to come and see him to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock.

2

J'oubliais de vous dire que nous avons une assemblée demain matin, peut-être même le soir, oui le soir, et aussi ce soir, parceque la chose la plus inutile pour faire une constitution c'est la réflexion. Voulez vous des billets pour demain? 1ère question que je demande la parole. 2e question . . . Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

I forgot to tell you that there is an Assembly to-morrow morning,

perhaps even in the evening (yes, it is in the evening), and also one to-night, for evidently the last thing that is necessary in making a constitution is to take time for reflexion, etc.

3

Je vous avertis, mon cher Dumont, comme bon et franc hérétique, que c'est mardi jour de la vierge, et par conséquant le coup de maitre est fait pour lundi. J'avertis mon cher Dumont en bon et digne ami, que je passe la journée au coin du feu ou dans mon lit, attend que l'on va m'appliquer les sangsues. Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

I warn you, my dear Dumont, as a good and honest heretic, that next day being Our Lady's day, the master stroke will come off on Monday. I also warn my dear Dumont, as a worthy and good friend, that I am spending the day by the fireside (or perhaps in bed) waiting till they come and apply the leeches. Vale et me Ama.

4

J'ai un billet pour vous, mon cher Dumont, voulez vous que je vous mène? vous rendez vous de votre côté? Vous m'aviez promis de venir ce matin, est ce pour m'obliger que vous manquez a votre engagement? Vous voudrez bien me faire repasser l'inscription civique, et si vous m'avez bien entendu sur la Montagne, le discour ministeriel qu'au reste j'aime bien mieux dans vos mains que dans les miennes. Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

I have a note for you, my dear Dumont, do you wish me to call for you, or will you come here? You promised to come this morning; do you think you are doing me a favour by throwing over your engagement? You wished me to look over the civic

inscription, and if you think you understood me about la Montagne the ministerial speech will be much better in your hands than in mine. Vale et me Ama.

5

Je vous renvoye, mon cher Dumont, la polémique Barnave. Il n'en a pas été question a la société de la Révolution; elle n'a été occupée que de détails interieurs, et a ce propos l'admission des étrangers a été votée.

Voulez vous ajouter deux feuilles que je reprendrais demain matin. 1, votre reponse a l'objection du nombre diminué des éligibles, et surtout a celle de substituer une loi invitatoire a une injonctive. Je crois avoir bien saisi votre pensée, mais il y a longtemps que je sais qu'on n'exprime jamais très bien que ce qu'on a conçu soi meme. Vale et me Ama. Soyez prêt demain pour dix heures.

(*Translation*)

I return you, my dear Dumont, Barnave's polemical. It was not alluded to at the Society of the Revolution, which was only occupied with private details, and, by the bye, the admission of strangers was agreed to. Will you add a couple of pages for my answers to-morrow? 1st, your reply to the objections to the diminished numbers of those eligible (for election), and also answer about substituting an invitation to sit instead of an injunction to do so. I think I have grasped your idea, but for a long time I have realized that one can never well express anyone else's conceptions. Vale et me Ama.

Be ready at ten to-morrow.

6

Voilà mon très cher ami votre métaphisique, qui est vraiment sublime. Cependant revoyez le style puisque vous seul êtes assez

difficile pour n'en êtes pas content et joignez y un morceau sur la jeunesse qui ait de la fraicheur, et un sur l'experience, qui ait de la sensibilité. Le style est un hameçon pour les français comme la raison pour les Anglais. Renvoyez moi le plutôt que vous pouvez la réplique de Barnave. Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

Here, my dearest friend, are your "metaphysics," which are really sublime, all the same you might polish up the style, for you are so particular that I don't think it will quite satisfy you, and put in a bit about youth, which must be full of buoyancy; and another on experience, which must be sympathetic.

"Style" is as much a bait for the French as "argument" is for the English. Send me back Barnave's answer as soon as you can. Vale et me Ama.

7

Le Comte de la Marck a saisi non avec plaisir mais avec reconnaissance, l'entrevue que vous lui offrez, soit ce matin a dix heures soit demain, il sera a vos ordres, mon cher Dumont, mais d'abord je voudrois bien vous voir auparavant; ensuite vous en avez vous même quelque besoin a ce que j'imagine. Dites moi donc, lequel de nous deux passera le matin chez l'autre? Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

The Comte de la Marck has accepted (not with pleasure, but with thankfulness) the interview that you propose for either this morning or to-morrow. At ten o'clock he will be at your orders, dear Dumont, but I should like to see you first, as I imagine you will have some affairs of your own to attend to afterwards, therefore please let me know which of us shall pass the morning with the other? Vale et me Ama.

8

Je vous envoie mon cher Dumont les 1ères feuilles de ce discour qui a tant besoin que vous le caressiez, je les reprendrai en allant à L'Assemble où cependant je ne comte pas parler ce matin. Pétion occupant très longtemps la scène. Pauvre nègre ayez pitié de vos frères. Pour moi je voudrais bien que le discour fut bon, mais je voudrais surtout que vous donassiez avant votre départ un jour à la causerie et à l'amitié. Vale et me Ama.

(*Translation*)

I am sending you, my dear Dumont, the first sheets of this speech, which is much in want of your loving attention. I will fetch it on my way to the Assembly, where, however, I do not expect to speak this morning, Pétion having occupied the scene for so long. Poor slave! pity your brother blacks! As for me, I hope the speech will be a good one. I hope still more that before you leave you will spare me a day in the cause of friendship and for the sake of a good talk. Vale et me Ama.

9

Je vois Mon cher Dumont, que l'on avoisine votre idée, et q'assurément elle passera, aumoins dans une certaine latitude de temps. Je vous prie donc, mon bon ami, d'achever votre ouvrage. C'est de l'Assemblée même que j'écris, elle est terrible aujourd'hui. L'affair de Toulon a tout mis en feu. Le commandant de la Marine et une partie de la garnison sont prisonniers. La coalition entre le crocodile et l'ichneumon n'est certainement pas faite. L'Aristocracie est outragée; il faut qu'elle ait des espérances, car elle n'a pas même le courage du désespoir. Vale et me Ama.

Je verrai ce soir le pacolet Mounier.

APPENDIX

(*Translation*)

I see, my dear Dumont, that your idea is being considered, and that it will be adopted after a certain time. I therefore beg you, my dear friend, to get the work completed. I am writing from the Assembly, it is in a terrible state to-day. The Toulon business has set the whole place on fire. The naval commander and part of the garrison are prisoners. The coalition between the crocodile and the ichneumon is not yet accomplished! The aristocracy is outraged! It must have some hopes left, as it has not even the courage of despair! Vale et me Ama.

I shall see this evening the "pacolet Mounier."

REFERENCES TO THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

Barnarve, guillotined as a Royalist 1793, aged 32.

Barrère de Vieuzac, one of the most violent of the Revolutionists, and though a friend of Robespierre was not involved in his fall, and was afterwards employed by Bonaparte to edit a paper, and was attached to the police. On the fall of Napoleon he took refuge in Belgium, but returned to Paris and died in 1839.

Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Gaudet were all executed with other Girondistes on the 31st of October, 1793.

Champfort, who wrote "Eloges au Molière et La Fontaine" and "Mustapha," a tragedy, destroyed himself to evade the guillotine in 1794.

Clavière, Duroverai, and Reybaz were of the inner circle of Mirabeau's friends and helpers.

Clavière, who was involved in the fall of the Girondistes, was arrested and sent to the tribunal, but put an end to his own life in prison, December, 1793, at the age of 58. This he did in

order to prevent the confiscation of his estates, which were thus preserved to his family.

CONDORCET, the friend of Voltaire and D'Alembert, was denounced by Robespierre as a Girondiste, escaped, but arrested, and took poison to avoid the scaffold, 1793.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS was educated with Robespierre and was Danton's secretary. Arrested by order of Robespierre, March 31, 1794, and guillotined on the 5th of April of the same year.

DUMOURIEZ had succeeded Lafayette in the command of the army of the north. After the execution of the King he wished to resign, but was not allowed to do so by the Convention. After the failure of his campaign his troops revolted and he retired to Switzerland, where he published his memoirs. A sum of 300,000 francs was offered for his head. He retired to England and died in his eighty-fifth year, in 1823, at Henley-on-Thames.

MALLOUET, a liberal Royalist, escaped from Paris after the September massacres and came to England, returned to France in 1801, served as a Prefect of Antwerp under Bonaparte, and was a member of the Chamber of Peers in the reign of Louis XVIII.

MOUNIER, a liberal Royalist, retired to Geneva. Returned to France in 1804, was nominated counsellor of State, died in 1806.

PÉTION had been mayor of Paris at the outbreak of the Revolution, was proscribed with the other Girondistes, but escaped and fled to Landes near Bordeaux, where his body was found half devoured by wolves.

DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD after the closing of the Assembly offered the King an asylum. Went in 1792 to the United States, returned in 1798. Was in the Chamber of Peers in 1814, and died in 1827.

ROLAND, committed suicide on hearing of the execution of his wife.

APPENDIX

THE ABBE SIEYES survived the Revolution, and was consul with Bonaparte and Ducos. Resigned in 1799, and was given a grant of money and land. Was exiled on the return of the Bourbons, but returned to France in 1830, and died in 1836.

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